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ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIOR OF SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

by

© PATRICK AUGUSTINE DUIGNAN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Dedicated To

My Mother and Father

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to observe and describe the administrative behavior of the superintendent. Eight superintendents were observed on-the-job for a total period of 34 days. Structured observation was used as the primary data gathering method. In addition, preliminary data were collected on the major events of each superintendent's administrative behavior for one week prior to the observation period and a structured interview was conducted with each superintendent.

Data were collected on the ongoing sequence of activities for each superintendent. Composite scores were then developed for all eight superintendents and from these scores a number of profiles were created of the superintendent's administrative behavior. Finally, a series of propositions were generated from the data concerning the nature of a superintendent's administrative behavior.

The findings and conclusions from the study indicate that the superintendent's daily work behavior is characterized by an involvement in a great number of activities, each of short duration. His work is essentially discontinuous in nature and he frequently has to deal with a variety of unrelated issues and problems which cause him to shift his attention from one activity to another as the situation demands. One of the main pressures of the superintendent's job is that of organizing and controlling his time. The superintendent's administrative behavior is not as planned and organized as is suggested in the literature related to the processes of administration. The

superintendent's inability to adhere to a planned time schedule is due, partly, to the fact that he spends a large proportion of his working time in verbal interactions, approximately half of which are initiated by others. In addition, the superintendent's commitment to an open-door policy with his subordinates tends to encourage impromptu interruptions and these place increased pressure on his already pre-empted time schedule. The superintendent also deals with a variety of problems each day many of which require his immediate attention.

The superintendent occupies a unique position in his school system. He has to deal with varying, and sometimes conflicting, expectations and multiple demands of different interest groups. As a result he is often called upon to act as a mediator and/or arbitrator in various disputes. He also has to be aware of the political forces that surround him and he has to, on occasion, become political himself in his dealings with various individuals and groups. As superintendent, he also commands a status position in his community and he is expected by school trustees and community members to speak for his school system on important issues and represent it at special functions and events.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The superintendent occupies an important position in the formal organization of the educational system. As the executive (usually the chief executive) of the school board and as the educational leader of his professional employees he coordinates the interdependent activities of numerous individuals and groups in achieving a common objective--the education of children.

Because of the importance of the superintendent's position in the administrative structure of the school system, a greater understanding of his administrative behavior would contribute to the development or refinement of concepts and theory in administration in general, and educational administration in particular. The interdependence of actual on-the-job behavior and theory in administration was stressed by Simon (1965:37) when he stated:

> The first task of administrative theory is to develop a set of concepts that will permit the description, in terms relevant to the theory, of administrative situations. These concepts, to be scientifically useful, must be operational; that is, their meanings must correspond to empirically observable facts or situations.

The observation and description of the administrative behavior of the superintendent can lead to further clarification of this relationship between "observed behaviors" and "theoretical concepts" in the study of educational administration.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The frame of reference proposed by Griffiths (1969:18) contains many of the essential elements of educational administration in one conceptualization. The dimensions identified by Griffiths were: the job, the man, and the social setting. Research studies on "the man himself" and on "the social setting" provide useful insights into the meaning of administrative behavior, but it is through a detailed examination of the "content of the work" that the essential elements of the administrative tasks can be best understood. The importance of using this knowledge about the work of the administrator as a basis for conceptualizations about educational administration was emphasized by Nolte (1966:199):

> One can visualize school administration, and indeed all administration, in terms of its content. Thus viewed, administration may be said to consist of the tasks which administrators perform, that is, the job to be done. . .

The statement leads directly to the question, "What is it that administrators do each day in discharging their administrative responsibilities? The literature on the subject provides a partial answer by identifying specific "principles" and "prescriptions" for administrative action and by listing a number of administrative tasks and functions, and the processes involved in carrying out these tasks and functions. An elaboration on these approaches with supporting literature sources will be presented in Chapter 2, but a brief review of the literature related to the processes of administration will help place the present study in perspective.

The definition of educational administration in terms of processes (an approach widely accepted by writers in educational

administration (Sears, 1950; American Association of School Administrators, 1955; Gregg, 1957; Miklos, 1968; Gue, 1977) is perhaps best exemplified by Gregg's (1959:269) definition which stated that administration consisted of "the total of the processes through which appropriate human and material resources are made available and made effective for accomplishing the purposes of an enterprise." This definition consisted of a refinement of Gulick's (1937:13) analysis of the work of the chief executive presented in the now well known acronym POSDCORB (planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting). Gregg (1957:270), in discussing Gulick's contribution to our understanding of the work of the chief executive stated:

> He (Gulick) raised the question of what the work of the chief executive is and then answered it as follows:
> "The answer is POSDCORB.
> POSDCORB is, of course, a made-up word designed to call attention to the various functional elements of the work of the chief executive . . . ."

Davis, 1957; Collins, 1958; Hencley, 1958; Wilson, 1960; Dykes, 1965; Downey, 1976; and others, have adopted the process categories in describing the administrative functions of the superintendent. This approach serves as a useful taxonomic tool through which conceptualizations regarding administration can be developed.

Halpin (1957:195), however, has voiced a caution about using the process categories to explain administrative behavior. He emphasized the distinction between observed administrative behavior and administrative process when he stated:

> Unless one is extremely careful he can easily be tempted into talking about "process" as if it were a free-floating affair, detached from the behavior of individuals . . . . An

> outside observer can never observe "process" qua "process"; he can observe only a sequence of behavior or behavior products from which he may infer process.

The observation of the administrative behavior of the school superintendent going about the conduct of his daily work would seem, therefore, to be both a legitimate and desirable method for the refinement and further development of definitions, concepts, and theory related to administrative behavior. Sargent and Belisle (1957:3) advocated increased attention to this form of research in educational administration over two decades ago when they suggested:

> All . . . efforts to discover, organize, and relate abstract knowledge about administrative behavior rests ultimately in the depth and adequacy with which they tap into the real stuff of administrative behavior, which consists of a particular administrator behaving in a particular situational sequence of interactions . . . . Checking general ideas or formulations against the reality of situations both helps to illuminate the concepts and theories and to guard against losing contact with the "stuff"--the reality of administration.

Despite Sargent and Belisle's encouraging words, the literature contains only a limited description of the "reality of the situation" for many of our educational administrators, such as, principals and superintendents. This present study tried to add to our knowledge of educational administration by concentrating on the superintendent's actual administrative behavior.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The central purpose of the study was to observe, describe, and analyze the administrative behaviors of eight Alberta superintendents with a view to developing some propositions about the substance of their work and the administrative functions they perform.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The manager (chief executive) of any organization performs a variety of tasks and functions in the process of discharging his administrative responsibilities. Managerial processes, tasks, and functions have received considerable attention in the literature, but there is a general lack of descriptive material concerning the specific content of managerial work. In other words, there is a scarcity of studies in the literature that describe what managers or executives actually do.

Similarly, the literature related to the school superintendent has focused on administrative processes, tasks, and functions. The emphasis in most studies is either on a superintendent's perception of what he thinks he <u>is</u> doing, or <u>ought</u> to be doing, or on the expectations held by others for his role. An example of this approach is provided by the Downey (1976:3) study, "The School Superintendency in Alberta." The objectives of this study were to describe the <u>real</u> and the <u>ideal</u> role(s) and position(s) of "the Alberta superintendent--in terms of the perceptions of various reference groups (including the superintendents themselves)." Little effort has been made in this or other studies to describe what it is the superintendent does in terms of specific behaviors, or to relate the findings of superintendency studies to actual observable behaviors of school superintendents.

The present study used a different approach to describing and analyzing the administrative behaviors of school superintendents. To a literature that has dealt almost exclusively with the behavior of school superintendents as it ought to be, or as it is interpreted and

reported by the person performing it, the present study adds another dimension: what a superintendent does in performing his administrative functions as observed by someone else. Wilson (1960), Campbell et al. (1970), Mintzberg (1973), and March (1974) have concluded that this is a valuable starting area if we are to (1) identify the skills an administrator needs to be effective in his job, and (2) provide an administrator with the necessary skills in our university training programs. March (1974:17-44), in his discussion on the "Analytical Skills and the University Training of Educational Administrators," emphasized the need to focus on the actual work behaviors of administrators. He identified as a major problem in the training of educational administrators "the tendency to try to improve managerial behavior in ways that are far removed from the ordinary organization of managerial life." He suggested that unless we analyze what managers and administrators actually do, and study why they organize their lives in the way they do, "we are likely to generate recommendations that are naive." Campbell et al. (1970:25) alluded to the same problem when they stated:

> The fly in the ointment of course, is our present inability to define and measure managerial task demands. The description of managerial job behavior is still at an absymally primitive level. The domain of management behavior remains an essentially undifferentiated mass.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Significance for Theory

This study has relevance for theory in that it approaches the concept of administrative behavior from a different perspective. The

description of the administrative behavior of the superintendent through the observation of his on-the-job activities, complements the findings of other studies in the literature related to administrative behavior. In addition, a number of propositions concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior have been generated in this study. Many of these propositions could be easily restated in the form of hypotheses and tested in further research studies.

Significance for Practice

The description of the administrative behaviors of the superintendents observed could provide a useful framework for university personnel or others planning either educational administration programs, or inservice sessions, for practicing, or aspiring, superintendents. A greater knowledge of the content of the superintendent's work should prove useful to those trying to make such courses and sessions more relevant to the demands of the job.

Such knowledge would also provide aspiring superintendents with greater insights into "what they are getting into" before they make a commitment to accept a position as superintendent of schools.

While it was not within the scope of this study to suggest what superintendents "ought" to be doing on the job, some practicing superintendents may wish to "check" their own practices and priorities against those outlined in the study. Knowing what a selection of other superintendents do could prove to be of benefit for those superintendents who may wish to evaluate their own operations.

DELIMITATIONS

1. This study focused on the content of the superintendent's work--the activities he engaged in each day. It dealt with what he did, not how he did it, and so no reference is made to the administrative styles of the various superintendents.

2. The investigation has been limited to school jurisdictions that have central offices within 150 miles from Edmonton.

3. Only superintendents with one hundred or more teachers in their jurisdictions were included in the population from which the sample was chosen. This arbitrary cut-off point was selected to exclude jurisdictions with a joint superintendency. A superintendent responsible for more than one jurisdiction might have to conduct many of his affairs, such as school board meeting, away from his office, thus, making it difficult for the researcher to conduct the observations.

4. The Edmonton Public and Separate school districts were excluded to provide for more uniformity, in terms of size, in the defined population.

5. Because of time restrictions, the researcher had to conduct the observations in the months of October, November, and December. It was not possible, therefore, to obtain a representative sampling of observations for all the months in the school year.

6. Because of the time-consuming nature of the observation technique for gathering data, and the restricted resources of the researcher, the sample size was limited to eight superintendents (34 days of observation). However, the ability of this technique to

provide data for an in-depth analysis of the superintendent's work activities suited the purpose of this study and was chosen accordingly.

LIMITATIONS

1. Despite the use of guidelines developed by Mintzberg (1973) for the categorization of behaviors and activities, there remained an element of subjectivity in interpreting the meaning, or the intent, of certain behaviors. Another observer watching the same behaviors might well produce a different kind of analysis. The following techniques were used to reduce this subjectivity to a minimum:

   a. the researcher checked his interpretations periodically with the superintendent being observed;

   b. the "appropriateness" of Mintzberg's (1973) categories was discussed with Superintendents A and B and no modification of their compositions was deemed necessary.

2. It is possible that the observees may have altered their behavior patterns, either consciously or unconsciously, because of the presence of the researcher. There may have been some change in behaviors, but, as much of what the superintendent did was "dictated" by others, and as the study focused on <u>what</u> he did and now on <u>how</u>, or <u>how well</u> he did it, there is reason to believe that there was little conscious effort made by the superintendent to change the things he did when under observation.

Nevertheless, the researcher endeavored to minimize the effects of his presence by:

   a. guaranteeing anonymity to each superintendent;

   b. being open and friendly with each superintendent;

c. trying to remain as inconspicuous as possible so as to avoid interrupting the "stream of behavior."

3. The sample size (eight superintendents) limits the generalizability of the findings. However, the random selection of the observees, together with the intensity and comprehensiveness of the data generated through the observation technique, should permit the development of meaningful propositions about the "essence" of the superintendent's work.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This chapter has presented (1) an introduction to the study, (2) the background to the study, (3) the purpose of the study, (4) the justification for the study, (5) the significance of the study, (6) the delimitations, and (7) the limitations. The following chapter presents a review of literature and research related to the study. An outline and explanation of the conceptual framework is also presented in this chapter. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the research design for the study and presents a detailed description of the methodology employed in the data collection and analysis.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide a description and an analysis of the data. Findings and a discussion of their characteristics are presented in Chapter 6.

The final chapter of the thesis provides a summary of the study, its conclusions, and some implications of the findings for theory and the practice of educational administration and for further research.

Chapter 2

RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The literature selected for review was related to research findings on administrative behavior. Alfonso et al. (1965:37), in deciding on what literature to include in their study of instructional behavior, suggested that:

> Two considerations must . . . be made. The first is to determine those fields of research that logically would offer information applicable to the educational behavior system generally. The second is to select from among those fields that appear to impinge most appropriately on the [administrative] behavior system specifically.

In the context of the present study on the nature of the superintendent's work, appropriateness was judged on the basis of how well a research study or literature selection contributed to an understanding of administrative behavior. Using the guidelines proposed by Alfonso et al., five fields of study were chosen. These were:

1. studies of administration as a set of principles, processes, and/or tasks;
2. studies of the role of the superintendent;
3. studies of leader behavior;
4. studies of administration as decision-making; and
5. studies of the content of an administrator's work, particularly Mintzberg's (1968) study of the work of five chief executives.

A review of the contributions made by various writers and researchers in the five areas of study just identified is presented in the following sections.

THE PRINCIPLES, PROCESSES AND FUNCTIONS APPROACHES

The study of management as a set of functions dates back to Henri Fayol (1916). From his experience Fayol developed a framework for a unifying doctrine of administration that he hoped would apply wherever the art of management had to be exercised. He regarded administration as an activity common to all forms of government ranging from the running of a home to the affairs of state. Fayol's stance on administration led to the development of a common core of administrative knowledge and principles. Fayol in his address to the Second International Congress of Administrative Science (1923; in Tillett et al. 1970:110-111) emphasized this approach.

> The meaning which I have given to the word 'administration' and which has been generally adopted, broadens considerably the field of administrative science. It embraces not only the public service but enterprises of every size and description, of every form and every purpose. All undertakings require planning, organization, command, coordination and control, and in order to function properly, all must observe the same general principles. We are no longer confronted with several administrative sciences, but with one which can be applied equally well to public and to private affairs.

Fayol's 'General Principles of Management'--planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling--have become widely accepted by managers and students of management alike, and have been regarded by many as being fundamental tenets of administration. Pugh et al. (1969:25) have emphasized the key contribution of Fayol to the study and practice of administration:

> He is the earliest known proponent of a theoretical analysis of managerial activities; an analysis which has withstood almost a half-century of critical discussion. There can have been few writers since who have not been influenced by it; and his five elements have provided a system of concepts with which managers may clarify their thinking about what it is they have to do.

Likewise, the writings of Frederick Taylor have had a profound impact on the development of management thinking. Taylor is credited as being the founder of what has become widely known as the Scientific Management movement. He advocated the application of scientific methods of enquiry and experiment to both production problems and to management itself. Taylor's discussion of management was focused mainly at the middle management level--the foreman in the shop--nevertheless he believed that all principles of the workshop could be applied to the management of all organizations. He stated (Taylor 1911:8):

> The same principles can be applied with equal force to all social activities; to the management of our homes, the management of our farms; the management of business, of our tradesmen large and small; of our churches; of our philanthropic institutions, our universities and our government departments.

As a result of Taylor's work, management became more of a science than a rule of thumb. Principles and prescriptions, as determined by many practitioners, replaced the old individual judgment or opinion. Hicks and Gullett (1975:180) acknowledged Taylor's contribution to the science of management.

> . . . Taylor's broader contributions to modern, systematic management practices are profound. Perhaps these contributions are sometimes ignored because of their great success and ubiquitous presence . . . the contributions of scientific management often are not fully appreciated because they are so close and so much a part of modern industrial life.

In 1937 Luther Gulick coined his now famous acronym--POSDCORB--to describe the important management functions. These functions which he identified as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting, and budgeting were similar to Fayol's principles.

Chester Barnard (1938:215-216), on the basis of his analysis of the functioning of organizations, also described the major functions of the executive. He suggested that executive work was "the specialized work of maintaining the organization in operation," and consisted of three tasks: (1) the maintenance of organizational communication; (2) the securing of essential services from individuals; and (3) the formulation of purposes and objectives. These executive functions "served to maintain a system of cooperative effort." While Barnard was more concerned with cooperation within the organization and did not advocate a science of management, his identification of executive functions justify his inclusion as one of the major contributors to the development of management thought.

The principles, functions, and processes approaches received renewed support in 1951 when William H. Newman of Columbia University published his book Administrative Action: The Technique of Organization and Management. Newman (1951:28) defined administration as "the guidance, leadership, and control of the efforts of a group of individuals toward some common goal." He identified the elements in the process of administration as planning, organizing, assembling resources, directing and controlling.

George Terry (1953:5) provided further impetus for the process approach with his definition of management as:

> the activity which plans, organizes, and controls the operations of the basic elements of man, materials, machines, methods, money, and markets, providing direction and co-ordination, and giving leadership to human efforts, so as to achieve the sought objectives of the enterprise.

Urwick (1956:84) used Fayol's elements of management as the basic functions in his general principles. He identified two fundamental categories of functions: process (forecasting, organization, and direction) and effect (planning, coordination, and control). He suggested that the "process of forecasting had the effect of a plan or planning. The process of Organizing had the effect of Coordination. The process of Directing had the effect of Control." Urwick believed that the discovery of the "correct principle underlying each of these pairs of principles [would give us] the general principles of management." Tead (1959:31) in summarizing the early writings on the subject concluded:

> The elements we thus by common consensus identify as essential components of administration are: (1) planning, (2) organizing, (3) staffing, (4) initiating, (5) delegating, (6) directing, (7) overseeing, (8) coordinating, (9) evaluating, and (10) motivating.

Koontz and O'Donnell (1964:38-39) in attempting to classify the functions of the manager have suggested that:

> Although the development of a theory and science of management suffers from disagreement among scholars and managers as to classification of managerial functions, a general pattern of practice and terminology has emerged. . . . The most useful method of classifying managerial functions is to group them around the activities of planning, organizing, staffing, direction and control.

Despite the claims of a "common consensus" regarding the make-up of the essential components of administration, the disagreements referred to above by Koontz and O'Donnell have proven difficult to overcome.

Attempts to Standardize Principles, Processes, and Functions

The five basic managerial functions identified by Fayol in 1916 are still regarded as important elements of managerial work. Mackenzie (1969:87) in an attempt to standarize the terminology and to provide "a way to fit together all generally accepted activities of management" ended up with somewhat familiar conclusions. He identified the primary functions of administration as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling.

Another serious attempt to bring uniformity to management theory was made by Harold Koontz over fifteen years ago. Koontz (1961: 174-188) noted that there were six main groups of "schools" of management thought:

1. The management process school
2. The empirical school
3. The human behavior school
4. The social system school
5. The decision theory school, and
6. The mathematical school.

Koontz suggested that the main causes of the "confusion" and the "jungle warfare" that existed between the various approaches were due primarily to the "inability or unwillingness of management theorists to understand each other." Misunderstandings were caused by "the semantic jungle" and the "walls of jargon" that were created by each school to protect the so-called uniqueness of its ideas. An attempt by Koontz to bring the representatives of all sides close together at a symposium in U.C.L.A. in 1962 resulted in little progress for the

cause of a universal theory of management. Koontz (1964:238) commenting on the symposium concluded that "semantic confusion was evident throughout the discussion." Little agreement was reached with regard to what would be the best approach to the development of a theory of administration.

Another group of writers tried to give the principles-processes-functions approach some uniformity and credibility by attempting to place it under the rubric of systems theory. The growth of general systems theory in the 1960's presented a challenge to some writers of the principles-processes-function's tradition to fit their approach into this new framework. Johnson et al. (1967) tried to combine general systems theory with the process approach to management. Voich and Wren (1968:V) suggested that the manager was ". . . the motivating and linking mechanism in a resource system in which he plans, organizes, controls, and administers the resources available to him." Haimann and Scott (1970:VI) attempted "to integrate the older more traditional functional approach to management with newer contributions from systems theory and the behavioral sciences."

The literature presented so far in this section indicates that the principles-processes approach to the study of administrative behavior has been widely accepted in the area of management theory. A variety of writers and researchers in the area of educational administration have also favored this principles-processes approach. A review of the contributions made by a number of these writers follows.

Educational Administration: A Set of Principles, Processes, and Functions

The use of descriptive and prescriptive lists to explain the function of the manager was adopted almost thirty years ago by students of educational administration. Jesse Sears (1950:36) adapted the work of Fayol and Gulick and identified what he believed to be the essential elements or functions of the administration of education, namely, planning, organization, direction, coordination and control.

The American Association of School Administrators (1955) endorsed Sears' approach and suggested that the primary elements of educational administration were, planning, allocation, coordination, evaluation, and stimulation. Gregg (1957:269-317) presented a comprehensive list of administrative processes which included elements identified by Fayol as well as those of the other writers discussed in this paper. Miklos (1968:1-8) used Gregg's eclectic formulation as a "most useful" approach to the description of the administrative process. The basic components of administration identified by both writers were planning, organizing, coordinating, decision-making, influencing, communicating, and evaluating.

The ideas of Fayol and Gulick, therefore, are still considered in the study of administrative theory and much of what is known about the functions of management, and subsequently of the functions of educational administration, derives from their writings. Despite the lack of uniformity with regard to the exact functions of administration, the principles-processes approach has provided a general

description of what administrators do.

ROLE STUDIES OF SUPERINTENDENTS

The Superintendent's Role in the Context of the School System

Getzels and Guba (1957:25) stated that the social system of a school district consists of "all members of a school organization working to achieve the goals of the school district." They conceive of the social system as involving two classes of interacting phenomena. First, there is the institution which has certain roles and expectations for its members. Second, there are the individual members of the institution with personalities and dispositions. Getzels et al. (1968:78) pointed out that social behavior in an organization is a function of the interaction of the institution and the individual. They stated:

> Here then are two components of behavior in a social system, the one conceived as arising in institutional goals and fulfilling role expectations, the other as arising in individual goals and fulfilling personality dispositions.

Specific responsibilities defined in a written job description or in policy statements originating from the school board form part of the institutional role expectation. This statement of responsibilities embodies the formal expectations of the organization for the incumbent of the superintendent's office. Often implicit in the chief executive's role are unexpressed expectations for his behavior, which are held by various individuals or groups with whom he comes into contact. These expectations may be dependent on precedent and tradition and are part of a mind set with regard to what a superintendent generally does.

Groups which may legitimately define a role are referred to as alter groups. For the superintendent the alter groups are composed of school board members, principals, teachers, parents, and perhaps students. Otto and Sanders (1964:247) pointed out that other more remote groups, called reference groups, may also help to define an incumbent's role, for example, the professional association of superintendents, college professors of education, and the authors of professional literature on the subject. However, within the context of this paper we will consider only the expectations held by 'alter' groups for the superintendent's role. More specifically, many of the studies dealt with reflect primarily the expectations of school trustees and members of the teaching profession.

Role Studies

What, therefore, do role studies tell us, if anything, about what superintendents do? The functions performed by the superintendent which are identified in many superintendency studies are very similar to those described by the writers in the principles-processes tradition. Davis (1957:4) stated that the superintendent in discharging his responsibilities worked through the following processes:

1. Sensing the problem and surveying its aspects.
2. Relating the problem to people.
3. Making decisions.
4. Implementing and reviewing.

Collins (1958:232-252) suggested that his study was concerned with functional roles as measured according to whether a superintendent's activity is primarily advisory, supervisory, or

administrative. Hencley (1958:73-92) discussed the administrative duties of the superintendent in such terms as hiring, organizing, planning, surveying, deciding, and operating. These broad general categories, like those of the processes and functions in management studies, indicate in general terms what the superintendent does in his day-to-day activities.

As further evidence of "an apparent attempt to condense the kaleidoscopic activities of the superintendent into a handy package for classification purposes," Wilson (1960:24) listed the administrator's duties as identified by Ramseyer et al. (1955): setting goals; making policy; determining roles; appraising effectiveness; coordinating administrative functions and structures; working with community leadership to promote improvements in education; using the educational resources of the community; involving people; and communicating. Fensch and Wilson (1964:63-68) discussed the major duties of the superintendent in such terms as coordinating, stimulating, executing, appraising, and decision-making. Dykes (1965:81-93) included directing and coordinating personnel, information giving, advising, determining and initiating as some of the responsibilities of the superintendent. The American Association of School Administrators (1968:6), in addressing the question of what the superintendent's job entails, concluded that his primary functions, regardless of type of organization or size of school system, were planning, evaluating, advising, and coordinating. Fitzgerald (1975:30) defined the management functions of the superintendent in terms of the five basic operations defined by Peter Drucker as:

1. setting objectives;
2. organizing activities and people;
3. motivating and communicating;
4. measuring or evaluating performance; and
5. developing people.

Downey (1976:16) reflected a similar orientation when he included as part of his questionnaire the "executive function" categories: educational leadership; personnel management; pupil relations; physical facilities; and executive officer functions.

Many of the studies reviewed identified various administrative tasks that a superintendent performs (Priestwood, 1953; Davies, 1957; Collins, 1958; Hencley, 1958; Wilson, 1960; Finlay, 1961; Fensch and Wilson, 1964; Stafford, 1964; Dykes, 1965; McCubbin, 1970; Fitzgerald, 1975; Downey, 1976). The eight most commonly agreed upon administrative tasks were identified as: (1) public relations activities; (2) advising the board; (3) budget preparation; (4) instructional improvement and evaluation; (5) personnel selection, development and evaluation; (6) pupil accounting; (7) managing, or advising on, property, equipment, and supplies; and (8) policy development and execution. These tasks of administration tend to focus more on actual administrative behavior than do the principles and processes of administration. Fisk (1957: 233) emphasized the relationship between administrative task and administrative behavior when he stated that ". . . the task of educational administration . . . is precisely that which the administrator personally accepts and translates into specific behaviors."

The findings of the role studies contribute to an understanding of the administrative behavior of the superintendent by focusing on the expectations held for his behavior by a number of alter groups.

RESEARCH ON LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR

Behling and Schriesheim (1976:295) suggested that the study of leadership has moved through three distinct periods or phases. In summing up the essence of these three periods they stated:

> In the first, researchers attempted to determine the traits and qualities of effective leaders and to develop a trait theory of leadership which held in all situations. The second phase, behavioral theory, involved both attempts to determine the major types of behaviors that leaders display toward subordinates and to determine their effects on group performance and satisfaction. The third and final phase, situational theory, involves viewing leadership as the results of interaction among (1) either the leader's traits or behaviors, (2) his subordinates, and (3) the situation.

Porter et al. (1975:423) have pointed out that "the efforts of 'trait' researchers have yielded long lists of individual difference characteristics which have been shown to correlate with effective leadership performance." However, Porter et al. conclude that "the correlations between these traits and actual group or subordinate effectiveness generally is so low . . . that their usefulness . . . is extremely limited." Stogdill (1974:4), after reviewing the literature on leadership traits, stated that though the research in this field "proved to be disappointing," nonetheless "a wide variety of traits . . . was found to differentiate leaders from followers and effective leaders from ineffective leaders."

The Behavioral Approach

The behavioral approach to the study of leadership was characterized by research studies aimed at exploring the relationship between leader behavior and work-group performance and satisfaction. Barrow (1977:233) pointed out that this new orientation to the study of leadership "shifted the emphasis from personality characteristics to the study of what the leader actually does, resulting in an increased understanding of the process of leadership."

A number of research programs concentrated on this aspect of leadership, but the two most notable were conducted at Ohio State University and at the University of Michigan.

Ohio State studies. The Ohio State studies tried to identify various independent dimensions of leader behavior, and the effects that a leader's style had on the performance and satisfaction of work groups. The research indicated that leader behavior can be separated into two distinct categories termed consideration and initiating structure. Consideration refers to a style of leadership behavior that emphasizes the needs of the work-group members and focuses on the development of good rapport between the leader and his subordinates. Initiating structure, on the other hand, typifies leadership behavior that stresses the importance of "getting things done," and structures relationships and activities towards that end.

University of Michigan studies. While the Ohio State studies tried to identify dominant leader behaviors and then determine their effect on the satisfaction and performance of subordinates, the University of Michigan studies focused on subordinate satisfaction and

performance and then tried to identify leader behavior that would maximize both. As a result of extensive research, two dimensions of leadership behavior were identified which were similar but not identical to the Ohio State dimensions. They were termed production orientation and employee orientation. Production orientation referred to leadership behavior that emphasized the importance of productive output and employee orientation reflected leader behavior that stressed the importance of taking an interest in subordinates as people.

The Ohio State studies and the Michigan studies identified somewhat similar dimensions of leader behaviors which were related to subordinate satisfaction and performance. Some interesting aspects of leadership style were uncovered in these studies, but the leader behavior dimensions identified are general in nature and do not describe the actual on-the-job behaviors of leaders and administrators. An attempt made by Bowers and Seashore (1966) to make the findings of the Ohio State studies and the Michigan studies more meaningful in terms of actual leader behavior is worthy of note. After reviewing the Ohio State and Michigan studies, Bowers and Seashore (1966:238-263) concluded that the host of leadership behaviors studied at those institutions could be categorized using four factors. This Four-Factor-Theory identified those dimensions of leadership behavior as: (1) support--typified by leader behavior that enhances a subordinate's feeling of self-esteem; (2) emphasis on goals--typified by leader behavior that encourages and stimulates the group to achieve their goal; (3) facilitation of interaction--typified by leader behavior that encourages group members to develop mutually satisfying relationships; and (4) facilitation of work--typified by leader behavior

that facilitates the achievement of goals by means of such activities as scheduling and coordinating. While Bowers and Seashore managed to reduce somewhat the abstractness of the behavior dimensions identified at Ohio State and Michigan, their approach would be more useful in providing a greater understanding of actual on-the-job leader behaviors if it dealt less with categories of leadership behaviors and focused more on specific leadership activities. Mott (1972:184) supported this point of view when he stated that:

> Such categories as democratic leadership, task leadership, and facilitation of interaction can be very misleading because specific activities can easily be placed in several different categories. Furthermore, any given activity can be interpreted variously, depending upon the situation in which it occurs. These reasons are all theoretical, but there is also one very important practical reason for concentrating on specific activities: The leader who tries to apply social science findings in practice can do so more readily and more effectively if he can adopt specific practices, rather than categories of practices.

Despite the criticism of Mott mentioned above, behavioral studies have identified specific dimensions of leader behavior. These behavioral studies, therefore, contribute to available knowledge on the nature of a superintendent's on-the-job administrative behavior. The situational approach to leadership behavior examined in the following section also helps to develop a more complete understanding of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

The Situational Approach

The situational approach to the study of leadership behavior proposed that the traits and behaviors of a leader must vary with the situation in which he finds himself, if he is to be effective. Filley and House (1969:397) pointed out that the factors identified by

situational theorists as influencing leadership effectiveness included:

> . . . the personality of the leader, (2) the performance requirements of the task of both the leader and his followers, (3) the attitudes, needs, and expectations of his followers, and (4) the organizational and physical environment of the leader and the group.

Two of the most widely known situational theories of leadership are Fiedler's Contingency Theory (1967) and House's Path-Goal Theory (1971). These theories of leadership are concerned more with variations in the situations in which leaders find themselves than with the specific behaviors exhibited by leaders in these situations. Two major dimensions of leader behavior are identified in the situational theories. These leader behavior dimensions are referred to as task-oriented behavior and relationship-oriented behavior in the Fiedler studies. The Path-Goal Theory uses leader behavior dimensions similar to the Ohio State studies of consideration and initiating structure.

Overall, leadership studies have identified major categories of leader behavior. While various studies have used different terminology to describe these behavior categories, the findings of these studies generally support the contention that leader behavior can be characterized as being directed toward the accomplishment of the organization's task or directed toward developing and maintaining good interpersonal relationships among organizational members. If we accept the notion that the superintendent is an educational leader, then, the leadership studies examined in this section provide additional information concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

ADMINISTRATION AS DECISION MAKING

A number of writers, both within and outside of education, have focused on decision making as the vital, if not the all-pervading, element of administration. Simon (1961:1), one of the chief proponents of this school of thought, stressed the central position of decision making in the process of administration when he stated:

> The task of "deciding" pervades the entire administrative organization quite as much as the task of "doing" . . . a general theory of administration must include principles of organization that will insure correct decision-making, just as it must include principles that will insure effective action.

Griffiths (1959:75) concurred when he suggested that "Decision-making is becoming generally recognized as the heart of organization and the process of administration." In addition Griffiths (1959:74) pointed out that:

> It is not only central in the sense that it is more important than other functions . . . ; it is also central in that all other functions of administration can best be interpreted in terms of the decision-making process.

These writers proposed that the primary function of the administrator was to control and facilitate the development of the decision-making process in his organization.

This all-pervasive quality of decision making in the task of administration was, perhaps, best portrayed by Litchfield (1956) who proposed that administration consisted of a cycle of activities beginning and ending with decision making. Owens (1970:90) in summarizing Litchfield's contribution in this area commented:

> This cycle which, for Litchfield, comprises the "administration process," involves the administrator not only in the making of decisions, but in the establishing of arrangements to implement these decisions (programming), to keep the organization informed (communicating), to adhere to the plans decided upon (controlling), and to evaluate results (reappraising). Presumably a new cycle of administrative process will flow from a reappraisal.

A recent and comprehensive statement of the importance of decision making in the day-to-day work of the executive was proposed by Simon (1977:40). He suggested that executives and their subordinates spend "a large fraction" of their time "surveying the economic, technical, political, and social environment to identify new conditions that call for new actions." In addition, Simon claimed that executives spend "an even larger fraction" of their time "seeking to invent, design, and develop possible courses of action for handling situations where a decision is needed." Furthermore, Simon sees these same executives spending only "a small fraction" of their time "choosing among alternative actions," and "a moderate portion" of their time evaluating the "outcomes of past actions as part of a repeating cycle that leads again to new decisions." In summing up his propositions regarding how executives spend their time, Simon (1977:40) concluded that "The four fractions, added together, account for most of what executives do."

In summary, the writers on the decision-making school of thought propose that an administrator's on-the-job behavior can be best understood in terms of the decision-making cycle, i.e., most of what administrators do can be categorized as to whether it consists of developing, facilitating, or evaluating the decision-making process.

These writers suggest that all administrative behavior is related to some aspect of the decision-making process. In other words, the decision-school writers regard the administrator as, primarily, a decision maker.

RESEARCH ON THE CONTENT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR'S WORK: WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

How accurately can we describe what constitutes the content of a superintendent's work from the findings of the writers and researchers mentioned so far in this chapter? What do superintendents of schools actually do? How do they spend their days? Their weeks? Their years? Wilson (1960:21) noted that the popular notions of the superintendent's duties as obtained from such sources would lead to the conclusion that:

> . . . a superintendent passes the time philosophising upon education and the state of youth, in planning an on-going curriculum, deciding how a financial pie should be cut, making awards, shuffling papers, supervising a teacher's handling of a learning unit, erecting a building, running a meeting of the board of education. . . . That he does all these things is true. To assume that this is the substance of his work load is grossly misleading.

March (1974:26), in discussing the content of training programs for educational administrators, echoed Wilson's sentiments. He pointed out that if we are going to consider ways of improving the effectiveness of administrators in their behavior we need to study on-the-job administrators to determine "the pattern of managerial activities." In addition, March suggested that unless we analyze what administrators actually do we are likely to develop misconceptions about their work. March (1974:25) cited the work of Mintzberg (1973) as a useful approach to the study of the content of managerial work. Other studies

by Hemphill and Walberg (1966), and Cohen and March (1973) tended to support Mintzberg's orientation.

Mintzberg (1973) suggested that although much has been written concerning the manager's job, we still know very little about it. Mintzberg (1973:10) has laid the blame for the lack of materials relating to actual managerial behaviors on the over-reliance of students of management on such neat categorizations of managerial functions as those presented by Gulick's POSDCORB. He stated:

> POSDCORB permeates the writing of popular theorists such as Peter Drucker and industrial leaders such as Ralph Cordiner; it appears when managers are asked to describe their work or when their job descriptions are read; it reappears in a multitude of . . . articles, reports, and textbooks.

Mintzberg (1973:24-25) concluded, as did Carlson (1951:24), Wilson (1960: 21), Braybrooke (1963:537) and March (1974:25), that the neat categories developed by the principles and processes writers did not, in fact, describe the actual work of managers at all. He noted that ". . . nowhere in the literature is content categorized, except in the vague words of POSDCORB." In addition, Mintzberg (1975A) suggested that if you ask a manager what he does, "he will most likely tell you that he plans, organizes, coordinates, and controls." However, Mintzberg pointed out that if you watch what he does, "Don't be surprised if you can't relate what you see to these four words."

Similarly, the superintendency studies reviewed in this paper fail to describe the actual activities engaged in by the superintendent. The functions of the superintendent are couched in terms similar to those of Gulick's handy acronym, and the activities, tasks, duties or responsibilities refer to broad categorizations of activities, for example, instructional improvement and evaluation, personnel selection,

development and evaluation, and public relations. The instrumentation used to collect data in these studies, usually questionnaires, imposed restrictions on responses through the use of neat and convenient categorizations. Many of these instruments tended to be constructed around such POSDCORB items as planning, coordinating, organizing, controlling.

A number of writers have suggested that part of the reason that researchers have not been able to accurately describe the work behavior of administrators has been the widespread use of the survey method for generating data on the subject. Carlson (1951), Burns (1957), Dubin and Spray (1964), Stewart (1967), and Lawler, Porter and Tannenbaum (1968) all recognized the limitations of the survey approach for studying on-the-job behavior, and they opted for the diary technique as an alternative. However, Stewart (1968:81) summarized the frustrations of trying to collect data on job content features by the diary method when she explained:

> There is no problem if one is asking unambiguous questions such as "where is he working?" "Is he alone or with someone else?" and "Who is he with?" . . . Such investigations tell one something about how the manager spends his working day, but little about the content of his work, which is the most interesting part of what he does. Those who have sought to describe it have usually thought in terms of the classic management functions, such as planning and organizing, or of activities like giving information or making decisions. The objection to these descriptions is that such activities cannot be defined so unambiguously that different managers recording the same tasks will necessarily classify them in the same way.

As a result of such problems Stewart decided to exclude job content items from her diary.

Mintzberg (1968) in his study of five chief executives in the United States used structured observation as a method of collecting his data. He suggested (1973:227-228) that this methodology combines

the "inductive power of observation" with the "structure of systematic recording," thus allowing the researcher to be both systematic and comprehensive in his investigations of the nature of managerial work behavior. One of the strengths of this approach is that the researcher can develop his categories of activities during his observation and after it takes place. He is generally influenced more by the events taking place before him than by any categories imposed by the literature.

Mintzberg's (1968) study provides some useful information about the chief executive's work which tends to contradict the classical view that the manager spends his time planning, controlling, coordinating and organizing. Mintzberg (1975A:60) isolated the main theme of his study when he stated regarding the manager's job:

> . . . the pressures of his job drive the manager to be superficial in his actions--to overload himself with work, encourage interruption, respond quickly to every stimulus, seek the tangible and avoid the abstract, make decisions in small increments, and do everything abruptly.

As a result of his own findings, and drawing on the conclusions reached in a number of diary and direct observation studies (Carlson, 1951; Guest, 1956; Neustadt, 1960; Stewart, 1967), Mintzberg (1973:11) concluded that the chief executive's job could best be described in terms of ten roles. Mintzberg (1973:54) defined a role as "an organized set of behaviors belonging to an identifiable office or position." He suggested that his delineation of managerial roles was "essentially a categorizing process, a somewhat arbitrary partitioning of the manager's activities into affinity groups." Mintzberg's roles, therefore, provide a description of the basic content of a manager's work. Mintzberg's

ten roles can be divided into three groupings--three interpersonal roles, which emanate from the manager's authority and status, three informational roles, which stem from the interpersonal roles and the access they provide for information, and four decisional roles, which derive from the chief executive's authority and information. He identified the ten roles as (Mintzberg, 1973:96):

> . . . figurehead, liaison and leader (interpersonal roles), monitor, disseminator, and spokesman (informational roles), and entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator (decisional roles).

A brief description of each of the roles, together with an illustration of some of the activities engaged in by an executive in performing the roles, will help describe more clearly Mintzberg's conclusions concerning the nature of an executive's work.

Interpersonal Roles

Mintzberg (1975A:54) indicated that the three interpersonal roles are derived directly from the executive's formal authority and "involve basic interpersonal relationships." As figurehead, the executive is a symbol, required because of his status and position to carry out a number of social, legal, and ceremonial duties. Regarding the leader role, Mintzberg (1976:645) suggested that:

> The leader role defines the manager's interpersonal relationships with his subordinates. He must bring together their needs and those of the organization to create a milieu in which they will work effectively. The manager motivates his subordinates, probes into their activities to keep them alert, and takes responsibility for the hiring, training and promoting of those closest to him.

In the liaison role the manager or executive develops a "network of contacts outside his organization, in which information and favors are

traded for mutual benefit" (Mintzberg, 1973:97).

Informational Roles

Because of his interpersonal contacts, the executive becomes the nerve center of his organization. The executive, because of his position, has access to important information sources and is able "to develop a powerful data base of information." Mintzberg (1973:97) stated that as monitor: "The manager continually seeks and receives information from a variety of sources in order to develop a thorough understanding of the organization and its environment." As disseminator the manager passes on both important and privileged information directly to his employees. As spokesman the manager transmits information to individuals outside his organization. Mintzberg (1976:645) described the essence of this role when he stated: "He acts in a public relations capacity, lobbies for his organization, informs key influencers, tells the public about the organization's performance, and sends useful information to his liaison contacts."

Decisional Roles

Mintzberg (1973:98) proposed that as entrepreneur the manager or executive "initiates and designs much of the controlled change in his organization. He continually searches for problems and opportunities." In performing this role the executive may be developing, supervising, or evaluating the progress of a large number of projects or other such endeavors. Mintzberg (1975A:57), discussing the executive's role in the supervision of various projects, stated that:

> The chief executive appears to maintain a kind of inventory of the development projects that he himself supervises--projects

> that are at various stages of development, some active and some in limbo. Like a juggler, he keeps a number of projects in the air; periodically, one comes down, is given a new burst of energy, and is sent back into orbit. At various intervals, he puts new projects on-stream and discards old ones.

The second decisional role identified by Mintzberg (1973:98) is that of disturbance handler. In this role the executive must respond to sudden crises. He must act to find a solution because the pressures of the situation are often severe and they seldom disappear when ignored. This part of the executive's work is frequently referred to as putting out fires.

Mintzberg (1976:646) described the resource allocator role of the manager. In performing this role he suggested that:

> The manager oversees the allocation of all his organization's resources and thereby maintains control of its strategy-making process. He does this in three ways. First, by scheduling his own time . . . . Second, the manager designs the basic work system of his organization . . . . He decides what will be done, who will do it, and what structure will be used. Third, the manager maintains ultimate control by authorizing, before implementation, all major decisions made by his organization.

The final decisional role is that of negotiator. As negotiator the executive directs or conducts important negotiations with representatives of other organizations, or with representatives of sub-units within his own organization. His presence is required because he has both the information base and the authority to either make, or advise on, the crucial decisions that must be made during such negotiations.

Mintzberg (1975B:5) pointed out that, perhaps, the most significant feature of the ten roles is that "they form a 'Gestalt', an integrated whole." In addition, he proposed that even though different chief executives emphasize different roles, the overall

description of the ten roles seems to apply to "all chief executives--in my study, for example, a school superintendent in a stable milieu and a company president in a highly competitive consumer goods industry."

Mintzberg's (1975A:49) conclusions about the nature of the chief executive's work is worthy of note. He stated:

> The facts show that managers are not reflective, regulated workers, informed by their massive MIS systems, scientific, and professional. The evidence suggests that they play a complex, intertwined combination of interpersonal, informational, and decisional roles. The author's message is that if managers want to be more effective, they must recognize what their job really is and then use the resources at hand to support rather than hamper their own nature.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

What areas of the literature can we look to for guidance in explaining or describing the nature of the superintendent's work? Five areas in the literature that relate to administrative behavior and appear relevant to the focus of this question have been discussed in this chapter. These literature areas were identified as: (1) literature on administration as a set of principles, processes and/or tasks; (2) literature on the role of the superintendent; (3) literature on leader behavior; (4) literature on administration as decision-making; and (5) literature on the content of a chief executive's work.

Much has been written concerning the specific functions, or tasks, that an executive or manager performs in discharging his duties and responsibilities. The nature of administration and the actual work of administrators have been studied and explained in terms of essential tasks and/or processes. Descriptive and prescriptive lists

have been identified or developed to explain what managers should do. These tasks and processes were adopted by students of educational administration and used to describe what it was that educational administrators do, or should do.

Other writers were more concerned with the superintendent's role as defined by the expectations of significant others. The superintendent's duties and responsibilities were identified by asking significant alter groups, such as school trustees and teachers, what they perceived his role/tasks were or should be.

Leadership studies, particularly those conducted at Ohio State and the University of Michigan, tried to isolate various dimensions of leader behavior and correlate them with group satisfaction and performance. The decision-school theorists defined administration in terms of a decision-process cycle and suggested that the administrator spent the major proportion of his time either making decisions, or facilitating the making of them.

A number of researchers have focused specifically on the nature and content of an executive's work through the use of diary and direct observation techniques. Mintzberg (1968) conducted such a study of five chief executives in the United States and as a result of his observations, and the findings of a number of other diary and observation studies, concluded that the manager's work could be best described in terms of three categories of roles, namely, interpersonal, informational, and decisional.

Each of the five literature sources presented in this chapter offers a different perspective of the nature of administration and of

administrative behavior. Some of these sources focus more specifically on actual administrative behaviors, while others emphasize broad categories of behavior, but, considered as a whole, the various literature sources reviewed help describe the essential elements of administrative behavior.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A Conceptualization of Administrative Behavior

The educational organization can be viewed as a Social System consisting of a number of interdependent sub-systems that cooperate to achieve a common goal or goals. In the case of the educational organization, the goal for the various sub-systems is the facilitation of student learning in certain defined directions. Alfonso et al. (1975:34) pointed out that each educational organization possesses a number of behavioral sub-systems that "have the general functions of contributing to the achievement of organizational goals" and help maintain "the operation and existence of the organization itself." These authors identify some of these behavioral systems as: the administrative behavior system, the teaching behavior system, the counselling behavior system, and the instructional-supervisory behavior system. This study dealt with the administrative behavior sub-system of the educational system and it focused specifically on the behavior of the superintendent within that sub-system.

Administrative behavior defined. In the Alfonso et al. conceptualization of the educational organization, administration is considered as one behavior system, separate from the other behavior systems. This presumes, therefore, that the phenomenon of administration can be isolated, observed, and defined in terms of specific behaviors. For the purpose of this study the definition of administrative behavior is taken from Gregg's (1957:269-270) definition of administration, and Alfonso, Firth, and Neville's (1975:35-36) definition of instructional-supervisory behavior. Administrative behavior is defined as: the total behaviors exhibited by an officially designated administrator through which, either directly or indirectly, appropriate human and material resources are made available and made effective for accomplishing the purposes of the school organization.

There are a number of key elements in this definition. First, the definition restricts administrative behavior to "officially designated" administrators thereby helping to avoid confusion concerning "Who is an administrator?" Many persons engage in various forms of administrative behavior in the school organization, but this study focuses on the behavior of an officially designated administrator, the superintendent. Second, the definition is sufficiently broad to include behaviors that may be indirectly involved in facilitating organizational goal achievement. For example, there may be little direct relationship between a superintendent's attendance of a social function or his appearance on television and the achievement of the stated goals of the school system, but, the superintendent performs such activities regularly as "part of the job." Therefore, such

behaviors are included within the parameters of this definition. Finally, the definition specifies that the behavior should be purposeful and directed toward the achievement of the goals of the school organization.

The approach taken in this study focused on behavior, not on role. Specifically, it centered on the administrative behavior exhibited by the superintendent in the processes of carrying out his day-to-day activities. The guidelines established in this definition were used as a framework for (1) screening the literature for findings and conclusions relevant to administrative behavior, and (2) isolating behaviors that could be classed as administrative, during the observation of eight Alberta superintendents. An examination of the steps involved in conducting these screening and isolating processes will follow.

The Literature Source

Figure 1 (adapted from Alfonso et al., 1975:41) illustrates the literature sources used, and the steps taken in selecting findings and conclusions relevant to the topic under study. The description of the steps involved has already been given in the review of literature, but the implications of the literature findings are discussed in Chapter 6.

Figure 1 identifies the five fields of study selected as part of the research base for the formulation of proposals related to the analysis of the superintendent's administrative behavior. The empirical findings and theoretical conclusions were screened using the parameters established in the definition of administrative

behavior, and those considered appropriate and relevant to the focus of this study were selected and evaluated in terms of how well they contributed to our knowledge about, and understanding of, the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

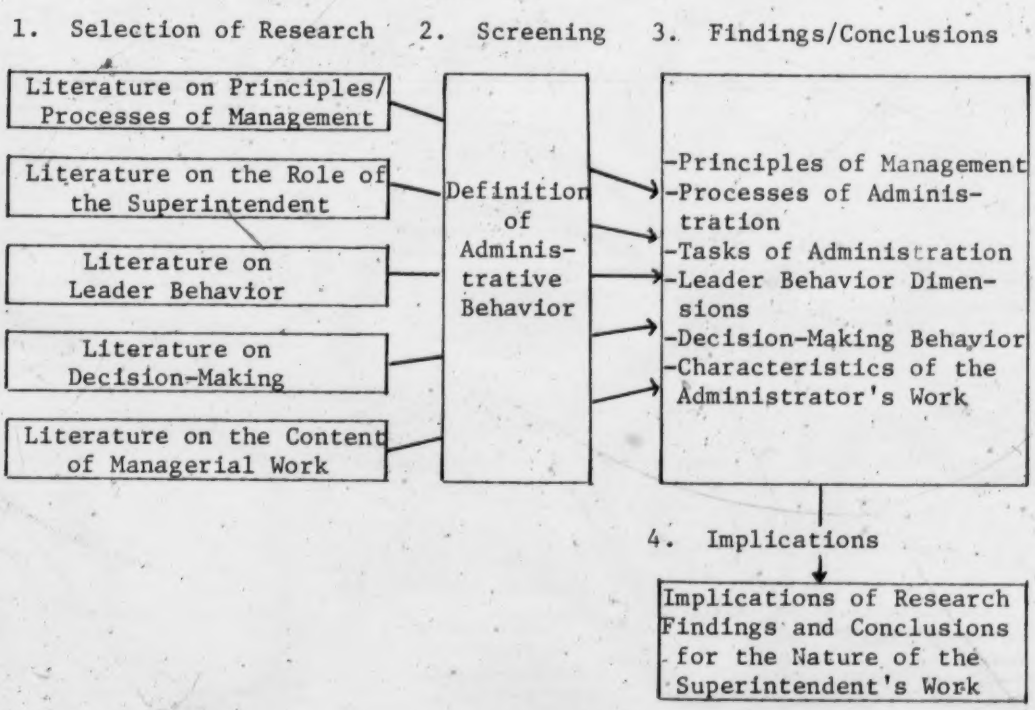
1. Selection of Research
2. Screening
3. Findings/Conclusions
Literature on Principles/ Processes of Management
Literature on the Role of the Superintendent
Literature on Leader Behavior
Literature on Decision-Making
Literature on the Content of Managerial Work
Definition of Administrative Behavior
-Principles of Management
-Processes of Administration
-Tasks of Administration
-Leader Behavior Dimensions
-Decision-Making Behavior
-Characteristics of the Administrator's Work
4. Implications
Implications of Research Findings and Conclusions for the Nature of the Superintendent's Work

Figure 1

The Steps Taken to Examine the Literature Relevant to Administrative Behavior

This Study as a Source

Figure 2 provides an overview of the steps taken in moving from a definition of administrative behavior through research findings, propositions, and conceptualizations about the nature of the superintendent's work. Figure 2 shows that any behavior recorded had to fall within the parameters established by the definition of administrative

behavior referred to earlier. The observed behaviors were then recorded in three ways: (1) a chronology record which consisted of a documentation of how each superintendent spent his time; (2) a contact record which showed in detail the superintendent's interactions with others; and (3) a mail record which presented a detailed description of the nature of the superintendent's incoming and outgoing mail.

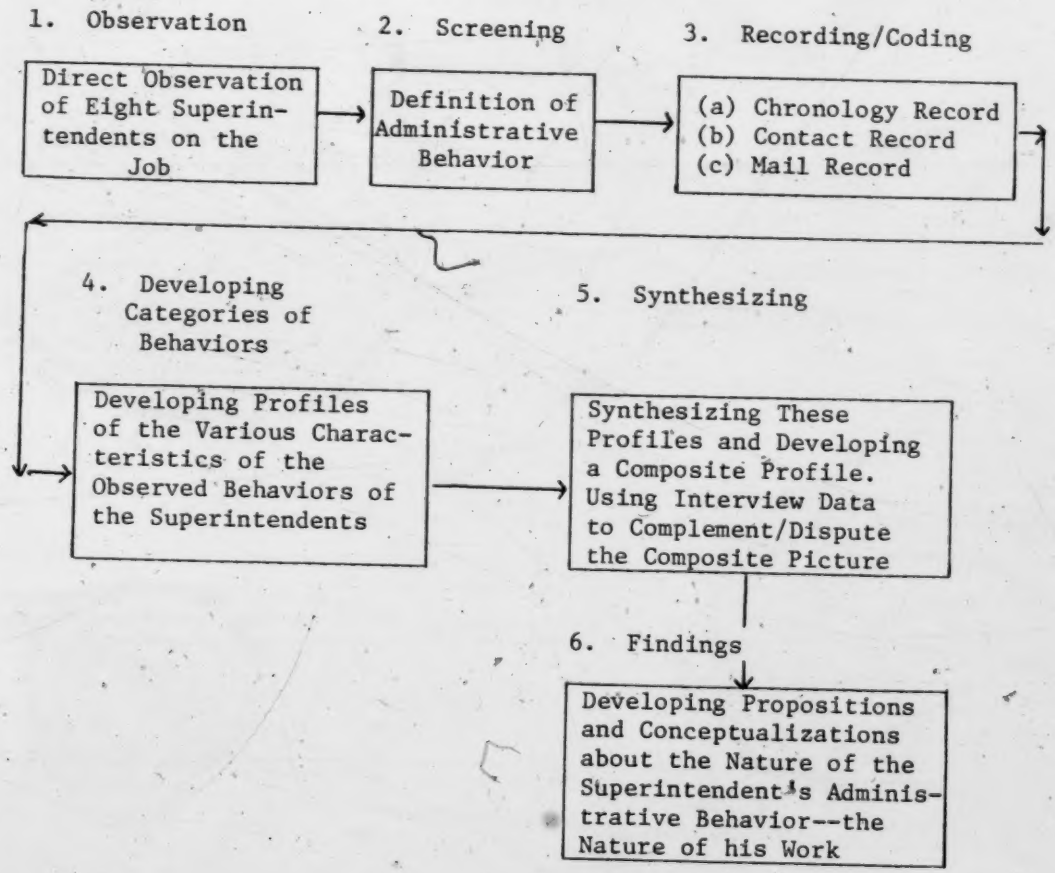
1. Observation
Direct Observation of Eight Superintendents on the Job
2. Screening
Definition of Administrative Behavior
3. Recording/Coding
(a) Chronology Record
(b) Contact Record
(c) Mail Record
4. Developing Categories of Behaviors
Developing Profiles of the Various Characteristics of the Observed Behaviors of the Superintendents
5. Synthesizing
Synthesizing These Profiles and Developing a Composite Profile. Using Interview Data to Complement/Dispute the Composite Picture
6. Findings
Developing Propositions and Conceptualizations about the Nature of the Superintendent's Administrative Behavior--the Nature of his Work

Figure 2

The Steps Involved in Developing Propositions and Conceptualizations of Administrative Behavior

These records were used as bases for constructing profiles of various aspects of the superintendent's work. Through a synthesis of these profiles a composite picture of the characteristics of his day-to-day-activities was developed.

This description of the observed actuality was then compared to, and combined with where possible, data generated from the following sources:

1. interviews conducted with the superintendents; and
2. information collected on the pattern of his activities for the week prior to the observation period.

The description of the superintendent's administrative behavior presented in Chapter 6 was derived from the data sources mentioned above.

The Framework for the Study

The overall framework for the study is presented in Figure 3. It provides a pictorial representation of the salient steps followed in generating propositions and conceptualizations of the administrative behavior of the superintendent. Figure 3 shows that the findings and conclusions derived from the literature related to administrative behavior provided background information on the theme of the study--the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior. However, the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 tends to describe administrative behavior in terms of broad categories of behavior and it does not provide an answer to the question: What is the actual administrative behavior of the superintendent? Through the observation of eight Alberta superintendents, the researcher focused on the superintendent's

administrative behavior with a view to describing what he does on the job and developing general propositions about the nature of his administrative behavior.

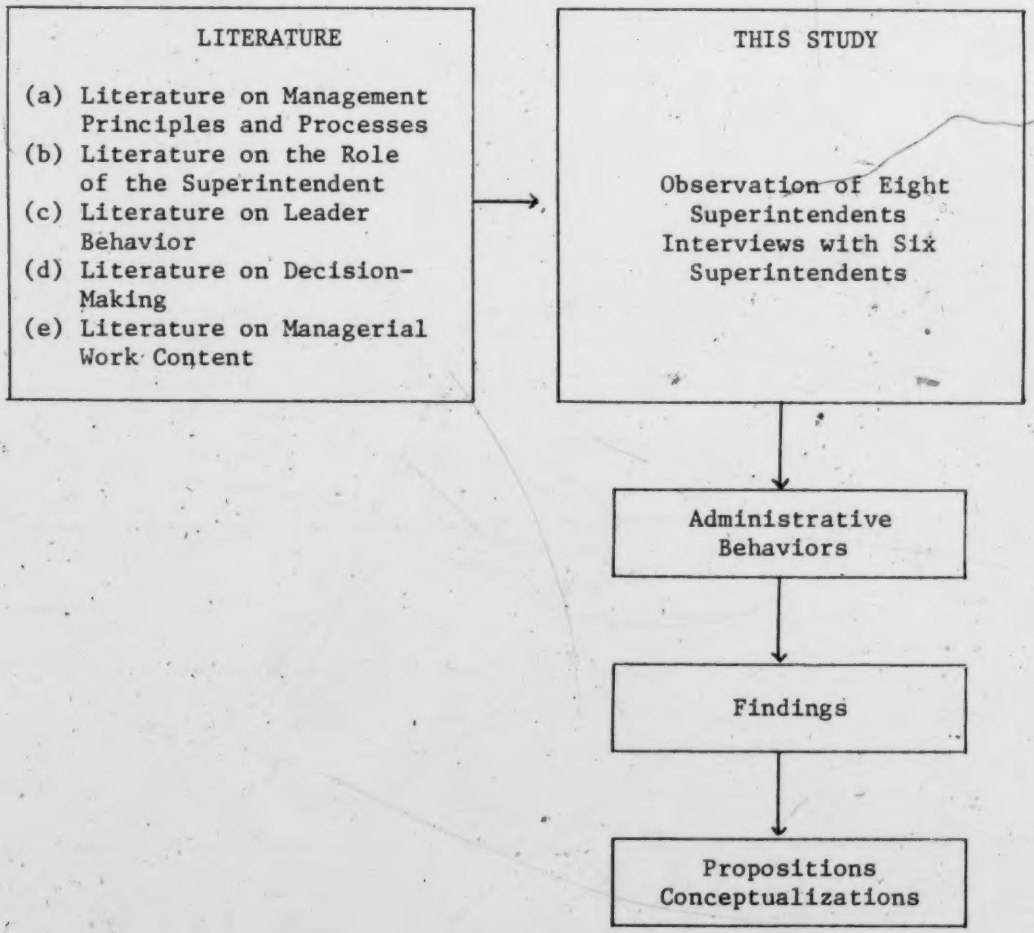

Figure 3

The Framework Used to Develop Conceptualizations on the Administrative Behavior of the Superintendent

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter is divided into four sections: (1) research design; (2) structured observation; (3) selection of the sample; and (4) methodology employed in the study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The Statement of the Problem

The central problem of this study was to observe and describe the actual on-the-job behavior of the superintendent of schools so as to develop a composite view of the nature of his administrative behavior.

Sub-Problems

In order to provide an answer to the major question posed in the statement of the problem the following sub-problems were stated:

1. What are the distinctive administrative behaviors of the school superintendent as defined in the literature?
2. What are the actual administrative behaviors of Alberta superintendents as identified through the structured observation of eight Alberta superintendents?
3. What tentative generalizations can be stated concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior?
4. To what extent are the ten managerial roles identified by Mintzberg applicable to the actual administrative behavior

of the observed superintendents?

The Design for the Study

A field-study approach was employed to generate an analytic description of the nature of a superintendent's work. Analytic description was defined by McCall and Simmons (1969:3) as being "something much more than journalistic description." They stated:

> An analytic description (1) employs the concepts, propositions, and empirical generalizations of a body of scientific theory as the basic guides in analysis and reporting, (2) employs thorough and systematic collection, classification, and reporting of facts, and (3) generates new empirical generalizations (and perhaps concepts and propositions as well) based on these data.

This study focused on the observation of behavior in the field, the administrative behavior of the superintendent. This observational technique led to the development of clusters or constellations of behaviors related to the superintendent's work. The findings of the study were supplemented by the data collected through interviews, and the information collected on the pattern of the superintendent's activities for the week prior to the observation period, to generate a description of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

Because of the nature of the study it was difficult to establish a compact research design. Strauss et al. (1964:20) referred to the problem of developing a research design in exploratory field studies. They stated:

> A . . . general characteristic of fieldwork is its temporally developing character. The fieldworker usually does not enter the field with specific hypotheses and a predetermined research design. To be sure, he does have general problems

in mind, as well as a theoretical framework that directs him to certain events in the field.

Kerlinger (1973:415) recommended that in this type of research the researcher could use a "flow plan" or chart to outline the design. He suggested that this flow plan would start with the objectives of the study, list each step taken, and end with a final report.

An example of such a flow plan, adapted from Coombs (1964:4), is presented in Figure 4.

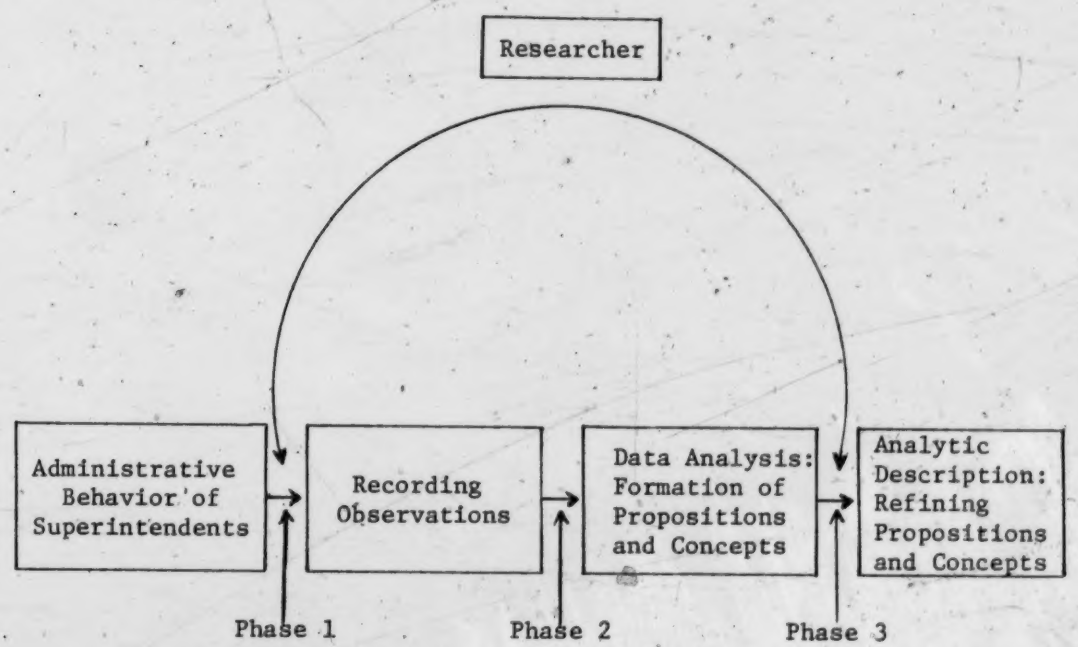

Figure 4

Flow Diagram of the Process of Developing Conceptualizations in a Field Study

The flow chart presented in Figure 4 outlines the stages or phases involved in developing conceptualizations about the nature of the superintendent's work from observations of his administrative behavior. These phases, which were identified by Coombs (1964:4) as

the essential steps that a research scientist must traverse in going "from the real world to inferences," are similar to the three stages in fieldwork proposed by Strauss et al. (1964:20). In discussing these stages they stated:

> The initial phase of fieldwork is a period of general observation: Specific problems and foci have not yet been determined . . . . During the second phase of fieldwork, the investigator has begun to make sense of the massive flow of events. Significant classes of persons and events have begun to emerge, certain aspects of the field have become important; and genuine propositions have been formulated. This second phase is marked by . . . an emerging set of propositions.
> A final phase consists of systematic effort to pinpoint various hypotheses.

The stages in this type of research process are, however, not necessarily discrete and sequential steps. The researcher actually may be working within two stages during any given period of time. During the observation and recording phases this researcher was also trying to generate working hypotheses through the development of theoretical notes. (An explanation of how these theoretical notes were utilized will be given in the methodology section). Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:134) stressed this interdependence of the various steps in the field study approach. They suggested:

> It is important to recognize that since the steps in analysis are not discrete, neither is the movement from data collection to data analysis discrete. The field study is conducted in much the same way as theory is generalized. Beginning with a hypothetical guess that is generated by a theory, and using its concepts, data are collected that modify or confirm the statement. This in turn modifies the theory, producing new hypotheses.

The processes involved in carrying out this research study, therefore, constituted the design for the study. These steps or phases in the research process include five of the six steps advocated

by Griffiths (1957:379) in his description of "an approach to theory building." He identified the steps as:

1. A description of administrative behavior in one situation.
2. A definition of certain basic concepts.
3. A more general statement which is descriptive of the average behavior in a limited number of situations.
4. A statement of one or more hypotheses.
5. An evaluation and reconstruction of hypotheses in accordance with later observations.
6. The statement of one or more principles.

An elaboration of these steps is presented in the sections dealing with structured observation and methodology.

STRUCTURED OBSERVATION

Structured observation was chosen as the primary method to study the superintendent at work. An extensive review of the relevant literature revealed that the structured observational technique of data gathering has not been used to study the administrative behavior of superintendents. The observational approach, therefore, can provide a new perspective on what is known of the superintendent's administrative behavior. In addition, findings generated through this approach can complement the findings provided by other relevant literature sources.

The observational method was used by Mintzberg (1968) in his study of the work pattern of five chief executives in the United States. Guest (1956), Jasinski (1956), Ponder (1957), O'Neill and Kubany (1959), Landsberger (1962), and Radomsky (1967) have all used structured observation in their studies of the work behavior of managers.

Riley (1963:997-998) emphasized the usefulness of structured observation in research. He stated that observational methods are often valued because they provide "a particular type of data, data with a wide range of detail and immediacy; and with 'whole' events preserved." Weick (1968:362) suggested that "observational methodology is typically used to watch persons in situations where they spend most of their time or in situations that at least are familiar to them."

In addition, the structured observational method has certain characteristics that make it germane to the study of work content. Mintzberg (1973:227-228) pointed out that this methodology combines the "inductive power of observation" with the "structure of systematic recording," thus enabling the researcher to "study systematically and comprehensively those parts of managerial work that are not well understood." This methodology allows the researcher to be more flexible in his observations and recordings allowing him to impose a structure during or after, rather than before, he collects his data. It combines the flexibility of unstructured (or open-ended) observation with the discipline of systematic selectivity of data.

The Role of the Researcher

The researcher involved in an observational study can have varying degrees of involvement with the situation being studied. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969) identified three potential roles that a researcher could adopt in an observational study: (1) the participant as observer; (2) the observer as a limited participant; and (3) the observer as a non-participant. The classification, observer as a non-participant, best describes the role of the researcher in this

study. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:112) described this role "as one that makes every effort not to impinge upon the social system." Essentially, it is a role that would not have existed in the school system's central office had the researcher not been there. This role allowed the observer to detach himself from the situation being observed so as to present a more objective analysis of the observations.

In terms of the classification scheme proposed by Lutz and Iannaccone (1969), the researcher in this study did not occupy an official role in the school system, but this does not mean that he remained completely aloof from the respondents. Rather, he assumed the posture that Schatzman and Strauss (1973:83) referred to as "limited interaction" observation. They described this orientation as follows:

> . . . the researcher engages in minimal clarifying interaction. In this type of situation, the observer does not set himself apart from the participants. His interventions in the flow of interaction are confined mainly to seeking clarification and the meaning of ongoing events . . . . This type of activity has two distinct advantages: it gets at meaning, and it meets the expectations of the hosts insofar as the researcher is not only an observer, but is also revealed as personable and interested . . . .

This combination of "observer as non-participant" with "limited interaction" allowed this researcher to be sociable and personable, without getting too close, and at the same time permitted him to become a "kind of member of the group." This helped to minimize the effects of his presence and thus preserve the situation as close to normal as possible. In addition, it was necessary at times to ask for clarification from the superintendent regarding the meaning of specific events, but such activities were kept to a minimum to avoid interrupting the

activities being observed.

Participant observation, in its various forms, means, however, something more than merely watching what respondents do and recording these observations. McCall and Simmons (1969:3) suggested that we should regard this approach, operationally "as the blend of methods and techniques that is characteristically employed in studies of social situations." These authors stated that we should view participant observation "not as a single method but as a type of enterprise, a style of combining several methods toward a particular end." McCall and Simmons (1969:4) also pointed out that we need other techniques of data gathering to supplement the data generated through observation because:

> . . . some features of an organization are only imperfectly inferable from direct observation. [This fact] emphasizes the need for yet another technique: interviewing the members or participants concerning their motives, their intentions, and their interpretations of the events in question.

All eight superintendents involved in the present study were interviewed for the purposes stated by McCall and Simmons and additionally to obtain their responses to a series of structured questions based on the ten roles identified by Mintzberg (1973).

The description of how the observations were conducted, recorded, and analyzed, and the problems associated with these steps, will be presented later in this chapter, but first a brief discussion is presented of the strengths and weaknesses of structured observation as a research tool. The strengths and weaknesses identified in the following sections are taken from the presentations of a number of authors writing in the area of field research (Becker and Geer, 1957;

Dean et al., 1967; Lutz and Iannaccone, 1969; McCall and Simmons, 1969; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; and Kerlinger, 1973).

Structured Observation: Strengths and Weaknesses

The research instrument in a study of this nature is really the observer himself. This fact is both a crucial strength and a crucial weakness. Kerlinger (1973:538) captured the essence of this argument when he suggested that:

> The observer must digest the information derived from his observations and then make inferences about constructs . . . . The strength is that the observer can relate the observed behavior to the constructs or variables of a study: he brings behavior and construct together . . . . The basic weakness of the observer is that he can make quite incorrect inferences from observations.

However, Becker and Geer (1957:32) suggested that the participant observer who is aware of these problems of inference is well equipped to deal with them because "he operates, when gathering data, in a social context rich in cues and information of all kinds." They argued that this "evergrowing fund" of information gives the observer "an extensive base for the interpretation and analytic use of any particular datum." In addition, these authors pointed out that the observer's role may even help the researcher avoid inferential error:

> . . . participant observation provides the opportunity for avoiding the errors we have discussed [inferential error] by providing a rich experimental context which causes him to become aware of incongruous or unexplained facts, makes him sensitive to their possible implications with other observed facts, and this pushes him continually to revise and adapt his theoretical orientation and specific problems in the direction of greater relevance to the phenomena under study.

Trow's (1957:35) caution is, however, particularly relevant here. He stated:

> The data gathered by participant observers are still data, despite the misleading circumstance that the participant observer usually both gathers and interprets the data himself, and to a large degree simultaneously. But the data he collects are not a substitute for the interpretative inference. We all forget that at our peril.

The problems of interpretation and inference will be elaborated on later in this chapter in the discussion on "Reliability" and "Validity."

Schatzman and Strauss (1973:53) pointed out an advantage of the observation method. They suggested that in using an observational approach the researcher does not need to rely on "first impressions for his descriptive and analytic stimulation" but endeavors to sustain a continuing "de novo sensitivity and appreciation" of all occurrences. In this way the researcher can avoid jumping to hasty conclusions and he can test his developing hypotheses in the light of later events: he is free to move from data to hypotheses and back again. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:115-116) stressed an additional advantage of this research method. They pointed out that through the use of an inductive approach the "classification of [observed] behavior is not forced into a preconceived scale or index of behavior." In a sense, the data are allowed to "speak for themselves" and "categories of behavior can be modified and remodified in order to better account for the data and thus more clearly describe the process." These authors concluded that process and understanding of process, often called in-depth study, is better done through the observational method.

Other advantages of the observational method, mentioned by many of the authors already referred to, are that:

1. it allows behavior to be recorded as it occurs, in its "natural environment";

2. it permits the recording of "the stream of behavior" so that whole events are preserved;
3. it allows the routine of the job to be observed and recorded. This routine, which may be a key to the understanding of the essential characteristics of a situation, is often missed out by other data gathering techniques.

There are, however, a number of problems associated with the use of the observational method. Dean et al. (1967:275-276) outlined two major limitations of this type of research. They stated that "because of the non-standardized way the data are collected, they are not generally useful for statistical treatment." A second major limitation stems from the fact that since the researcher is constantly influenced by emerging data, there is "great danger that he will guide the inquiry in accord with wrong impressions." In addition, the researcher's personality or experience may cause him to be biased in either his selection of observed behavior and/or the interpretation and reporting of it.

Finally, the observer's actual presence may have an effect on the situation he is observing. It is possible that a respondent will alter his behavior pattern, either consciously or unconsciously, because of the presence of the observer.

The problems associated with the observational approach have been dealt with in a general manner in this section. Some of these problems can be eliminated, or at least minimized, in any research situation, but others are inherent in the nature of the technique. Some of these problems are discussed in greater detail later when they are relevant to a particular aspect of this study.

Effects of Presence of Researcher

The non-participant observer is typically a fixture in any observational setting and his actual presence may have an impact on the behavior being observed. Weick (1968:369) in addressing himself to this problem stated:

> While information is scant about whether persons behave differently when being watched, most investigators who study persons in familiar habitats argue that subjects soon forget that they are being watched or, if they do not, the observer will notice their concern.

To support his conclusion Weick suggested that interference of the observer had also been assessed by Barker and Wright (1955:441), Purcell and Brady (1965:61), and Soskin and John (1963) and the general conclusion was that "interference is not extensive, and when it occurs, its effects are usually localized in the period when observation begins."

Mintzberg (1973:269) supported the point of view that the researcher's presence does not influence the work the manager does. He suggested that:

> The basic events of any manager's week are not subject to major change simply because a researcher is present. Scheduled meetings are set up well in advance, and incoming telephone calls and mail are not influenced by the presence of an observer . . . given the kinds of information to which I was exposed, there was no reason to believe that activities were delayed to avoid my being exposed to them.

Kerlinger (1973:539) argued in a similar manner. He concluded that observers "have little effect on the situations they observe. Individuals and groups seem to adapt rather quickly to an observer's presence and to act as they would usually act." However, Kerlinger cautioned that this does not mean that an observer cannot have an

effect. If the researcher takes care "to be unobtrusive" and to avoid giving the impression that judgments are being made, "then the observer as an influential stimulus is mostly nullified."

Keeping in mind the advice offered by Kerlinger, this researcher took a number of steps to try to minimize the effects of his presence. Because the observational method for collecting data is so dependent on the permission, goodwill, and cooperation of each respondent, specific arrangements and conditions were established with each superintendent. These were:

1. each superintendent involved in the study was fully informed as to the purpose of the study;
2. each superintendent was given the opportunity to check on and clarify interpretations of events made by the observer;
3. each superintendent was guaranteed anonymity in the research report;
4. an agreement was reached with each superintendent at what stage the observer would leave a situation when it was delicate or personal in nature;
5. the researcher tried to make as few demands as possible on each cooperating superintendent. Apart from occasional exchanges for the purpose of clarification and/or interpretation, each superintendent was able to pursue his work unencumbered by the researcher's demands;
6. the researcher sought and received both the permission and support of the executive of the Conference of Alberta Superintendents for the study.

Overall, the research was conducted in as non-threatening a manner as possible. Every attempt was made by the observer to establish a "trust relationship" with each superintendent observed.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Choosing Superintendents to be Studied

The type of methodology used, structured observation, imposed restrictions on the size of the sample. The researcher had to choose between generating a large quantity of data from a broad sample using alternative methodologies, or electing for more in-depth data related to selected job behaviors, through structured observation. Given the primary purpose of this study--to describe what it was the superintendent actually did--the latter methodology with its restrictions on sample size was judged to be more useful.

A stratified random sample of eight superintendents--four from divisions and districts and four from county systems--was chosen from a defined population of superintendents whose school systems had central offices within a 150 mile range of Edmonton city and who had one hundred or more teachers under their jurisdiction. The sample was stratified in this way so as to determine if the work of a county superintendent--who in Alberta is prohibited by legislation from being the chief executive officer of the county system--was any different from that of a district or division superintendent.

The two large urban systems in Edmonton city were, however, excluded because their superintendents, having such large complements of supplementary staff in their central offices, might not perform the broad spectrum of administrative activities performed by those

superintendents in smaller systems. The exclusion of these large systems helped to provide a more uniform population from which to choose the sample.

Choosing the Observational Period

Choosing the observational period for each superintendent was also a sampling problem. To supplement the observation data, so as to get a broader view of the usual mix of work for these superintendents, data were collected on administrative activities occurring for one week prior to the observational period. Data on such things as the frequency of meetings, types of participants, most important tasks, most important decisions, and most important requests were collected for that week. This information was used as a match against the data generated on these same aspects of his work during the period of observation to try to get a broader time base for the study.

The actual observations were conducted during the months of October, November and December, 1977. Two of the superintendents were observed for two days each and the six remaining superintendents were observed for five days each, for a total of 34 days of observation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: DATA COLLECTION, RECORDING AND ANALYSIS

Pilot Study

Eight superintendents were observed over a period of 34 days. Each superintendent was identified in the study by one of the first eight letters of the alphabet, A, B, C, etc. A pilot study

was conducted with Superintendents A and B for the purpose of testing the efficiency and appropriateness of the observation and recording techniques. However, as only minor adjustments were considered necessary in these procedures, the data generated from the four days of observations were included with the data for the main part of the study. Another consideration in the decision to include the pilot study data was the nature of the study itself. Attempts at developing new categories of behavior and at modifying those classifications developed by Mintzberg (1968) were carried out throughout the period of the study and after the observations themselves were over (see Appendix B). Because the pilot study observations were recorded in detailed field notes, it was possible to apply the same coding and analysis techniques to them as to the data in the main study.

A structured interview was also conducted with each superintendent. The structured interview questions were greatly modified as a result of the interviews with Superintendents A and B, and consequently only the data generated from the interviews with the remaining six superintendents were used to support conclusions reached in this study.

DATA COLLECTION

Preliminary Data

A general description of the principal activities, decisions, meetings, and problems of the week prior to the observation period was obtained from each superintendent and his secretary. This information helped to provide a partial background for some of the activities and

problems that occurred during the period of observation. In addition, it assisted in developing a more general picture of the superintendent's work over a more extended period of time. These data were also used to support conclusions arrived at in this study.

Unit of Behavior

One of the first and most difficult tasks facing a field observer is the necessity of dividing the observed stream of behavior into identifiable units. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:120) noted that "what constitutes a unit of observed behavior has long been a stumbling block for the observer of human interaction and social systems." Kerlinger (1973:542) commented on this same problem when he stated:

> What units to use in measuring human behavior is still an unsettled problem. Here one is often faced with a clash between reliability and validity demands. Theoretically, one can attain a high degree of reliability by using small and easily observed and recorded units. One can attempt to define behavior quite operationally by listing a large number of behavioral acts, and can thus attain a high degree of precision and reliability. Yet in so doing one may also have so reduced the behavior that it no longer bears much resemblance to the behavior one intended to observe. Thus validity may be lost.

Kerlinger (1973) suggested that a researcher using structured observation can choose to (1) identify and record specific behavioral acts, which he referred to as the molecular approach, and/or (2) identify and record broad categories of behavior, which he termed a molar approach. Kerlinger's distinction between a molecular and a molar approach to identifying observable units of behavior is similar to Guest's (1960: 225) discrimination between "low level of inference" and "high level of inference." Guest claimed that one of the apparent problems in breaking down behavior into units was the confusion over the level of

inference at which the observer operates. The lowest level of inference, Guest suggested, was to observe simply that "A speaks to B." The answer to the question, "Why does A speak to B?" is a high inference level of observation. Guest argued that a low level of inference approach is a useful and necessary starting point in any field study. He suggested that in many social system situations we are often unable to answer the "deceptively simple classificatory question, who does what, with whom, when, and where?" Guest stated (1960:226-227) that categories of administrative behavior such as planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating, "are too far removed from the first level of inference to be useful in the direct observation of events."

This researcher combined the low inference--molecular--and the high inference--molar--approaches. The primary focus of this study was to describe in detail the on-the-job administrative behaviors of the superintendents and, therefore, it was felt that the identification of low inference units of behavior would best accomplish this end. However, having recorded a chronology of such units of behavior the researcher asked the question, "What was the purpose for which each behavioral act was undertaken?" It was the answers to this question applied to the chronology of acts that provided the high level of inference analysis for this study.

Criteria for selecting the units of behavior. Guest (1960) reviewed a number of classificatory systems that observers had used at the low inference level of observation and chose an "incident" as the basic unit of behavior for his study. This unit was almost identical to Mintzberg's (1968) "activity" as a basic unit of behavior

classification. The basic unit of behavior chosen in this study was the "administrative activity" which combined the characteristics of Guest's incident and Mintzberg's activity. An administrative activity was defined as a single event with an identity of its own. It had an observable beginning and ending in a time continuum. It ended when a major change occurred in one of the elements or dimensions of the superintendent's behavior, e.g., when there was a change in the basic participants and/or medium of communication.

Each superintendent's administrative behavior during the period of observation was recorded chronologically and classified in terms of Mintzberg's (1973) seven major types of activities. These activities were identified as: (1) unscheduled meetings; (2) scheduled meetings; (3) desk work; (4) telephone calls; (5) travel within the system; (6) tours and visits; and (7) evening meetings. Each of these activities was classed according to specific dimensions. A description of these dimensions and how these activities were recorded is presented later in this chapter.

Explanation of Terms

Unscheduled meetings. These referred to meetings between the superintendent and others that took place by chance, on the spur of-the-moment, or with less than 30 minutes notice.

Scheduled meetings. These consisted of meetings between the superintendent and others that were arranged at least 30 minutes prior to their occurrence.

Desk work. This refers to the times that the superintendent worked at his desk, processing mail, writing letters and reports, and reflecting on events.

Telephone calls. These included both incoming and outgoing telephone calls. Any calls placed by the superintendent that were not completed, for whatever reason, were included.

Travel within the system. This included travel by the superintendent to various system schools during his working day, as well as travel to evening meetings.

Tours and visits. These refer to the time spent by the superintendent in various parts of his school system for the purpose of (1) observing general aspects of the system's operation, and (2) observing classroom teachers for evaluation.

Evening meetings. These included only those meetings that were judged to be related to the purposes of the school system; some social functions were included while others were excluded using this criterion.

RECORDING THE DATA

While much emphasis in fieldwork is placed on preserving "the freshness and naturalness" of the data observed in its natural setting, a researcher should have some standardized procedures for observing and recording to help explain how the study was conducted and thereby permit replication. Despite the warning of Krathwohl et al. (1964:8) that "any classification scheme represents an attempt to abstract and

order phenomena and as such probably does some violence to the phenomena as commonly observed in natural settings," the use of some form of procedures for observing and recording is desirable if the researcher is to "pull the full richness of meaning from observed phenomena."

In addition, the classification of behavior can never be fully atheoretical. McCutcheon (1978:10) noted that it is difficult to observe and record phenomena without attributing meaning. She stated that "we perceive the world selectively, screened through our values and preferences, our theoretical positions, our understanding of the world." However, knowing the fundamentals of a theory and the recent findings of research should not be equated with having preconceived ideas, or a prior solution to the problem. In this study a combination of the procedures proposed by Mintzberg (1968) and Schatzman and Strauss (1973) guided the successive operations of recording, organizing and analyzing the major activities of each superintendent. The emphasis is placed on guided because these procedures, which were useful in charting the course for recording and analyzing the data, did not restrict the researcher in viewing them from a number of perspectives.

The Recording Procedure

Structural data were collected on the pattern of each superintendent's administrative behavior throughout every minute of each day during the observation period and on all his mail and verbal contacts. A number of steps were used in recording and organizing these data. Examples of these steps are given in the next sections.

Observational notes. The details of the observed administrative behavior of each superintendent were kept in a series of observational notes. Schatzman and Strauss (1973) recommended that a researcher develop a comprehensive set of field notes on his observations. These low-inference level notes were defined by Schatzman and Strauss (1973:95) as:

> [Observational notes are] statements bearing upon events experienced principally through watching and listening. They contain as little interpretation as possible, and are as reliable as the observer can construct them. An observational note is the Who, What, Where and How of human activity.

Each observational note represents an event deemed important enough to be recorded, to be used later as evidence in the construction of propositions or to help describe the context for such propositions. To help explain the function of these notes in the data collecting procedures, an extract from them for part of a Wednesday morning for Superintendent F is presented below:

> Superintendent F began his working day with a tour of an elementary school at 8:00 a.m. He walked a couple of corridors and greeted a couple of the teachers who were there. At 8:10 a.m. he sat down at his desk, tidied it, and processed mail item number one [the contents of all mail items are described in the Mail Record]. At 8:19 a.m. the assistant superintendent dropped in and discussed with the superintendent his plans for the day. At 8:21 a.m. the superintendent returned to his desk work and processed mail item 2. At 8:24 a.m. he was interrupted by the Coordinator for Math and Science who wanted permission to go ahead with a streaming procedure for students in his subject area. A discussion followed and the permission was granted.
>
> At 8:30 a.m. he continued processing his mail and dealt with item 3. At 8:34 the secretary-treasurer came in--a scheduled meeting--and the superintendent requested him to "dig up" the tape of a meeting with a group of teachers on policy development as he needed to "jog his memory" regarding the details of a problem that was referred to at the meeting. [The superintendent had these meetings taped so that the interpretations and intentions of policy could

be checked on]. At 8:39 a.m. the superintendent received a telephone call from the local ballet school president requesting the superintendent to have his schools participate in an upcoming inservice program on dance. He assured her that he would give his support.

At 8:50 he made a call to a teacher who had applied for a position. He asked him a number of questions concerning his professional training and experience. At 8:58 he continued to work at his desk and processed mail items 4 and 5. At 9:07 he attended a scheduled meeting with his administrative assistant during which budget plans and procedures for handling the budget were discussed. This meeting lasted until 10:30 at which time he received a telephone call from a school principal who wanted to know when the superintendent could come to the school. A date and time was established for the visit.

At 10:32 a.m. he returned to his desk work and processed mail items 6 and 7. At 10:35 a.m. he met as prearranged with his administrative assistant and again discussed budget strategy and procedures.

At 10:40 a.m. he travelled out to a school to attend a scheduled meeting with a trustee and principal to discuss procedures for repairing building damage.

The next step in the processing of the data was the construction of three different records from the observational notes (adapted from Mintzberg, 1968). The chronology record described the sequence of administrative behavior in terms of the major categories of activities--units of behavior--and cross-referenced the other two records. The contact record described each contact that the superintendent made and the mail record described each piece of incoming and outgoing mail.

The chronology record. Table 1 presents the chronology record for the observational notes just presented on Superintendent F. The full record for one superintendent is presented in Appendix A. This record provides basic data on the sequence of activities for the superintendent during his working day. It shows at a glance the mix of activities that characterized the superintendent's work and the

time devoted to these activities. It is cross-referenced with the contact record and the mail record to help the reader put the items of the three records together in their proper time sequence.

Table 1

Sample of Chronology Record for Superintendent F

Time	Medium	Reference	Duration (in mins.)
8:00	Tour	A	5
8:10	Desk Work	1	9
8:19	Unscheduled Meeting	B	2
8:21	Desk Work	2	3
8:24	Unscheduled Meeting	C	6
8:30	Desk Work	3	4
8:34	Scheduled Meeting	D	5
8:39	Call	E	11
8:50	Call	F	8
8:58	Desk Work	4-5	9
9:07	Scheduled Meeting	G	83
10:30	Call	H	2
10:32	Desk Work	6-7	3
10:35	Scheduled Meeting	I	5
10:40	Travel	J	20

The contact record. All the contacts for each superintendent were processed in exactly the same manner. The dimensions used in recording each contact were taken from the procedures used by Guest (1960), Mintzberg (1968), and Griffiths (1969). The dimensions used were: (1) the medium of communication--scheduled meeting, unscheduled meeting, telephone call, and classroom visit; (2) the decision outcome--no decision required, decision made (programmed), decision made (non-programmed), strategy for decision established, or decision postponed; (3) participants; (4) initiator--self (if superintendent initiated), other (if initiated by someone else), or regular (if

contact occurred on a regularly scheduled basis); (5) duration; and (6) place where contact occurred.

The contact record allowed the researcher to develop a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of the superintendent's interactions and to answer the low-level inference questions of "Who does the superintendent interact with, and where? Who initiated the interaction, and how long did each interaction last?" The attributing of purpose to these interactions constituted a higher level of inference and this "purpose dimension" became an important component for the development of propositions concerning the nature of a superintendent's work.

Table 2 presents, as an example, the record of Superintendent F's contacts as described in the observational notes.

The mail record. Table 3 provides the mail record of Superintendent F for the observational period recorded in the observational notes presented earlier. Form, sender, and action taken are straightforward categorizations. The purpose category described the purpose, from the superintendent's point of view, of each mail item.

DATA ANALYSIS

One of the most difficult questions faced by the field researcher who has collected qualitative data is how to analyze it. Schatzman and Strauss (1973:108) elaborated on this problem when they stated:

> Qualitative analysts do not often enjoy the operational advantages of their quantitative cousins in being able to predict their own analytic processes; consequently, they cannot refine and order their own data by operations

Table 2

Sample of the Contact Record for Superintendent F

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiator	Duration (mins.)	Place
B	UM	Scheduling (day's activities)	DS	Ass.Supt.	Other	2	Office
C	UM	Request (program authorization)	DM (np)	Co-ordinator	Other	6	Office
D	SM	Supt. Request (info. on problem)	NDR	Sec.Tr.	Self	5	Office
E	Call	Request (inservice cooperation)	DM (np)	Pres.Ballet	Other	11	Office
F	Call	Supt. Request (professional info.)	NDR	Teacher	Self	8	Office
G	SM	Strategy (resource allocation)	DS	Adm.Assist.	Self	83	Office
H	Call	Scheduling (school visit)	DM (np)	Principal	Other	2	Office
I	SM	Strategy (resource allocation)	DS	Adm.Assist.	Self	5	Other
K	SM	Strategy (operations maintenance)	DS	Trustee, Principal	Self	13	School

UM = unscheduled meeting
Call = telephone call
DM = decision made
(np) = nonprogrammed decision
SM = scheduled meeting
DS = strategy for decision
NNR = no decision required

Table 3

Sample of Mail Record for Superintendent F

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
1	Letter	Teacher	Unsolicited application for job	Read/work file
2	Agenda	Self	Board meeting (tonight)	Board meeting file
3	Newspaper	Publisher	Provincial news	Skimmed/wastebasket
4	Policy	Another Supt.	General policy from another system	Skimmed/filed
5	Memo	Self	Requesting Co-ordinator to do work	Written/to Co-ordinator
6	Letter	Bargaining Assoc.	Notification of intent to place a grievance	Read/both put in Board meeting file
7	Letter	Bargaining Assoc.	Notice of intent to open negotiations	

> built initially into the design of the research. Qualitative data are exceedingly complex, and not readily convertible into standard measurable units of objects seen and heard; they vary in level of abstraction, in frequency of occurrence, in relevance to the central questions in the research.

While no hypotheses were explicitly stated, and no specific statistical treatment was applied in this study, the researcher, nevertheless, used processes and techniques derived from the work of a number of field researchers (Mintzberg, 1968; Glaser, 1969; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; and McCutcheon, 1978) to analyze the data.

As was mentioned previously, two types of data were recorded from the field observations. First, low inference level or molecular data were recorded in the chronology record and in the various dimensions of the contact and mail records (except for the category indicating the "purpose" for which a contact or mail item was initiated). Second, high-level inference or molar data were generated through the use of theoretical notes and the analysis of the categories of "purpose for which an activity was initiated."

Low Inference Level Data: An Analysis

Profiles were constructed for the superintendents detailing the proportions of their working time devoted to each of the seven major activities identified by Mintzberg (1968)--unscheduled meetings, scheduled meetings, telephone calls, desk work, travel within their systems, evening meetings, and tours and visits to schools. In addition, a composite picture showing these same categories was constructed for all eight superintendents. These profiles are presented in Chapter 4.

A more detailed analysis of the way in which the superintendent spent his time is presented in Chapter 5. Profiles, using the composite

scores for all eight superintendents, were developed to answer Guest's (1960:225) "deceptively simple classificatory question, Who does what, with whom, when, and where?"

Composite scores. This research report presents a description of the administrative behavior of eight superintendents, from the population of practicing Alberta superintendents, as observed over the period of the study. This description of behavior is similar to what Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:121) referred to in their study as a "Total Description of Behavior." This is quite distinct from a description of total behavior, because as these authors pointed out, "total behavior is not observable to any researcher in any role by any method. The researcher can only select a sample for the population to which he intends to generalize." The total description of behavior is actually a sample of behavior similar to the sample of the population from which the experimentalist collects data. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:121) pointed out that this "total description can be collected as a random sample of the population or representative of certain aspects of the population," and as such it is not unlike the "mass of data in an experimental design." In discussing "Total Description" they suggest:

> It consists of many single data. As a group, the data represent a sample of behavior selected according to some sampling technique. The researcher must place his confidence in the mean statistic of the sample and not in a single datum . . . . That is what any social researcher does. Given a set of achievement scores from a fifth grade class, the mean of the scores may not be an actual score. Yet it better describes the achievement of the fifth grade class than does any single pupil's score. It has standard error, but it is still a relatively stable measure of the group's achievement. So the "Total Description" and the generalizations derived from it are a relatively stable measure of the society's behavior.

The data analysis presented in Chapter 4 of this study is the "total description" of behavior for all eight superintendents observed. The analysis of the data in Chapter 5 is based on what Mintzberg (1968) referred to as the "composite scores" for the eight superintendents--the weighted averages. This composite score, similar to the mean score proposed by Lutz and Iannaccone, was used as a basis for describing the nature of the superintendent's work. The small sample of eight superintendents and the nature of the data (primarily qualitative) precluded the use of statistical inference for generalizing to the population of Alberta superintendents. The composite score, supported by additional data generated through the interviews and through high inference level observations, was used, therefore, to describe the administrative behavior of the "typical" Alberta superintendent.

High Inference Level Data: An Analysis

The high inference level observations consisted, primarily, of two types of data: (1) theoretical notes developed by the researcher, and (2) categories of purpose developed to describe the purpose for which the various verbal and written contacts of each superintendent were initiated. An explanation of the development of these two analysis techniques follows.

1. Theoretical notes (TN's). Schatzman and Strauss (1973) recommended that a field researcher develop theoretical notes as well as his observational notes during and after the observational period. In the field situation the researcher is constantly trying to make sense out of what he observes. One method for doing this is to develop tentative working hypotheses to provide a number of foci for the mass

of data recorded from the observations.

Data collection and data analysis are not necessarily distinct and separate phases in field research. The field researcher usually engages in data analyzing activities early in the research process. While writing the observational notes, the researcher also attempts to add to them some reflections and interpretations. Schatzman and Strauss (1973:95) suggested that such attempts by the researcher "represent self-conscious, controlled attempts to derive meaning from any one or several observation notes." Through the development of theoretical notes the researcher strives to make conceptual sense of observed events.

On the one hand, these notes may consist of a detailed elaboration of a particular inference or, on the other hand, they may constitute an attempt to link a number of previously stated inferences into a more abstract statement. The development of theoretical notes is equivalent to the process of data interpretation referred to by McCutcheon (1978:11) as "patterning." She described patterning as "an attempt to see how each discrete fact relates to the total matrix of other facts collected in the . . . situation." By constructing patterns of observed activities, McCutcheon suggested that: "discrete actions are given coherence, form, and meaning; they do not remain random isolated acts."

The theoretical notes, therefore, constitute a record of the development of the researcher's thoughts about the meaning of the observed data. They often note and describe events that have been frequently observed. Schatzman and Strauss (1973:109) suggested that

"the systematic development of theoretical notes can be thought of as a preliminary analysis."

A large number of theoretical notes were written in trying to interpret and attribute meaning to what was observed. Many of these notes were grouped together around a specific topic or tentative hypothesis and represented the development of the researcher's thinking on such a topic over time. Two sets of theoretical notes on different topics are presented as examples to clarify this process for the reader.

TN1. Superintendent A appeared to be very conscious of the desirability of having good relationships with his teachers. He said, "I like to treat people with dignity and respect." Teachers seemed to like his style, they appeared to regard him as "easy to approach."

TN2. Superintendent C also stressed the need for developing good relationship with his employees and parents. On one occasion when he drove a truck with band instruments, he remarked, "Teachers like to know that you are willing to pitch in and give a hand."

TN3. It seems that much that could be classed as "public relations" is not directly observable. It consists more of the "style of operations" rather than what was actually done. Only on occasion did Superintendent C perform a public relations activity, such as talking with reporters or attending a social function as a representative of his system, yet he was continually striving to improve relationships in his system. He commented: "This system used to operate on a Theory X philosophy when I came and I want to make it Theory Y."

TN4. Public relations activities were often performed in a subtle manner. The performance of a specific activity, such as writing a letter, or making a phone call often afforded Superintendent D the opportunity to further good relationships with his staff. For example, in reply to a written request from a teacher to be allowed to plan an inservice for teachers with a university professor, he replied: "I commend Dr. _____ on his choice of assistant." In reply to a similar request from a teacher, he stated: "I know you will represent our system well." To a new principal, he said: "I feel we have placed the school in good hands."

TN5. Superintendent E operated on a very personal level, for example: "How did your bridge game go?" was a typical opening remark for conversation with a subordinate.

TN6. "Accessibility" was the hallmark of Superintendent F. The ability to mix the public relations function with the performance of many aspects of the job was evident on many occasions.

Tentative proposition arising from these theoretical notes.

The public relations function of the superintendent is as much a reflection of the way in which he performs his work, and how he treats people, as it is an expression of a directly observable public-relations activity, such as, representing his school system at a social function, or explaining school board policy to the public.

Further evidence to support this proposition was supplied by many of the superintendents in responding to an interview question on this same topic. A synthesis of these responses showed that the superintendent regarded public relations not as "a job to be performed," but "the way the job is performed." Superintendent D's response to this interview question is particularly relevant to this point. He stated: "Public relations is an ancillary activity; you have to do your job first. I don't see the superintendent going around shaking hands and kissing babies."

A second set of theoretical notes and a related proposition follows:

TN1. The researcher noted that a telephone call from a social worker to Superintendent A initiated a series of calls on the part of the Superintendent and thereby accounted for a large proportion of a full morning's work. This led the researcher to speculate that the superintendent is often the victim of what could be called "the chain-reaction syndrome." In other words, a particular event--telephone call, mail item, meeting with a subordinate--can generate a series of attendant activities for the superintendent.

TN2. This fact was witnessed again and again by the researcher. It seemed to be true for all the superintendents observed. Events that brought problems to the notice of the superintendent were the most prominent catalysts. The following description depicts such a "chain reaction."

(a) In a telephone conversation, Principal A informed the superintendent that he had heard "via the grapevine" that a teacher in Principal B's school intended to initiate a grievance against Principal A, concerning his abuse of teacher aides in a program.

(b) The superintendent called Principal B, informed him of the "rumour" and asked him to check it out.

(c) The superintendent called in his assistant, discussed the "potential problem" with him and questioned him on the background of the teacher.

(d) Later, after having talked to the teacher in question, Principal B called the superintendent to inform him that the "rumour" was indeed "fact" and that it really was the Teachers' Association who was laying the charge through the teacher.

(e) The superintendent called Principal A and relayed the information.

(f) Later the same day, Principal B dropped in to discuss the problem with the superintendent.

Tentative proposition arising from these theoretical notes.

It is difficult for a superintendent to spend his working time in accordance with pre-established plans or priorities because certain items of information, or events, tend to initiate a series of activities by the superintendent that often take up a whole morning, a whole day, or possibly more of his working time.

Numerous examples of this type of occurrence were observed by the researcher and helped to reinforce this supposition. In addition, all of the superintendents interviewed indicated to the researcher that much of their time was taken up responding to unexpected problems and events. In responding to the question, "How well

can you plan the use of your time?" Superintendent C summed up the feelings of most of the superintendents. He said: "Sure I can plan as to how I will spend my time. I can plan to spend one-third to one-half of my day dealing with unplanned-for-events."

The theoretical notes aided the researcher in generating some of the generalized propositions presented in Chapter 6. These notes formed part of the methodology for developing the propositions from the recorded observations. The process of developing the theoretical notes represented an attempt by the researcher to factor analyze the data, and thereby develop a number of foci around which to organize the data. The data to support these general propositions were derived from the observational notes, the interview responses and the information gathered on each superintendent's activities for one week prior to the observation period.

2. The purposes for which verbal and mail contacts were initiated. The analysis of the purpose for which each contact and mail item was initiated constituted an important part of the analytic description of the nature of the superintendent's work. Mintzberg (1973:245), in evaluating the importance of the analysis of the "mail and contact purposes" in his study, stated:

> The key to our study was the categorization of the purpose. This describes the essential content of managerial activity--in raw form, what five managers did--and it is what led to the development of the theory on roles.

The forming of classes or categories to describe the purposes of the content of each contact and mail items was an iterative and developmental process. Griffiths (1969:18) suggested that such classes or categories are actually "theoretical entities that are

formulated for purposes of grouping observations." In proposing some guidelines for classifying behavioral units he defined classification as the "ordering of phenomena into groups (or sets) on the basis of their relationships, that is, their association by contiguity, similarity, or both."

An example of the way in which the categories of purpose were recorded for both the verbal and written contacts is presented in Tables 2 and 3 (pp. 71-72). The details of how these categories of purpose were developed and coded are explained in Appendix B. The following description of the development of one such category and its sub-categories is provided to help the reader understand the process.

A number of contacts initiated by the superintendent were for the purpose of requesting something. In such cases "Superintendent Request" was designated as the primary purpose for the contact. The primary purpose recorded for a contact was the ostensible purpose, which was usually easy to discern. At times, however, the researcher had to check his interpretation with the superintendent to determine if it was correct. Each superintendent's request dealt with some substantive topic and this secondary purpose was also recorded and coded.

The classification of secondary purpose, however, was a difficult task. The content of each contact, and mail item, was examined carefully and the question was posed: "What aspect of the administrative task is this concerned with?" The method used to fit secondary purposes into the various sub-categories of the superintendent's request was to allow the data to suggest a particular

category and then strive for consistency through the use of what Glaser (1965:220) referred to as the "Constant Comparative Method." He suggested that when coding an incident for a category the researcher should "compare it with the previous incidents coded in the same category." This process was both difficult and time consuming. It necessitated the rereading of the original field notes on numerous occasions until such time as the researcher became thoroughly familiar with the process. Even then, some of the new data on purposes would not "fit" into the established categories and, consequently, new categories had to be established.

After applying this process to the primary purpose category, "Superintendent Request," the following sub-categories were developed to accommodate all such instances. The examples cited to help explain each sub-category are actual instances from the study.

1. General information or advice.
2. Resource allocation information or advice, e.g., asking a principal if he wanted extra money for a program.
3. Operations maintenance information or advice, e.g., asking the caretaking supervisor if he thought a certain school should be painted.
4. Operations planning information or advice, e.g., asking the secretary treasurer for information to help him organize the upcoming budget.
5. Legal information or advice, e.g., asking the Trustee Association's lawyer for advice on a grievance.
6. Program information or advice, e.g., asking a principal how the new work experience program was progressing.

7. Policy and procedures information or advice, e.g., asking a school trustee how the preamble to a new policy should be worded.
8. Authorization, e.g., asking a chairman of the board for permission to attend a conference, or a board for permission to initiate a new driving program.
9. Delegation of task, e.g., asking the assistant superintendent to evaluate and write reports on a group of new teachers.

It was from the information coded in such categories as these that the data analysis figures and tables, presented in Chapter 5 on the purposes for the verbal and mail contacts, were derived.

Summary: Data Collection, Coding and Analysis

Figure 5 (an adaptation of Mintzberg's, 1973, model) provides a pictorial summary of the procedures described in Chapter 3. Figure 5 identifies the sources of raw data used in the study as: (1) the superintendent's diary for the week prior to the period of observation; (2) the structured observation of eight superintendents; and (3) the interviews conducted with each superintendent. The data were coded and recorded in a chronology record, a mail record and a contact record. The data analysis and interpretation consisted of the following steps: (1) the development of profiles of the superintendent's work; (2) the analysis of the purposes of the verbal and written contacts; and (3) the development of theoretical notes to generate tentative propositions.

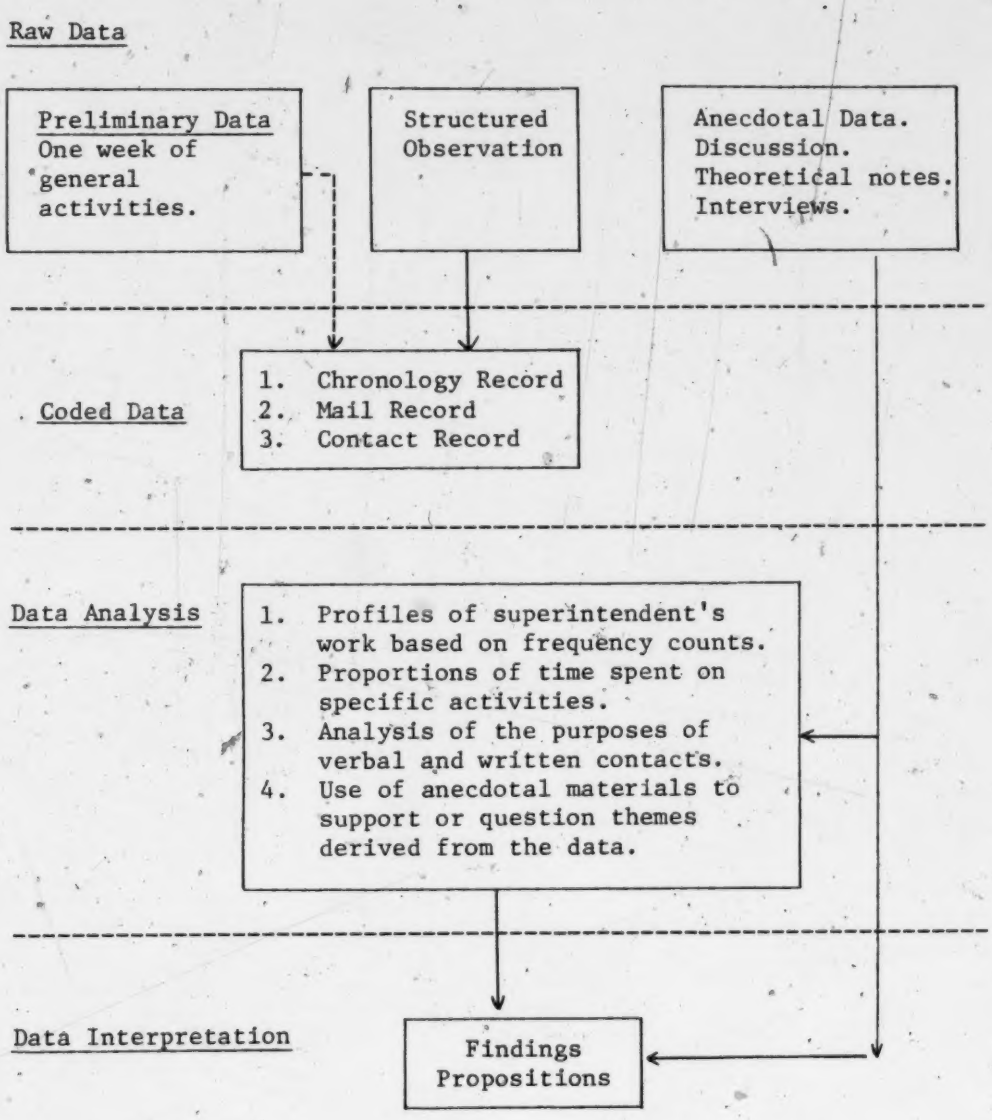

Figure 5

Procedures Involved in Data Collection, Coding and Analysis

Reliability and Validity of Results

Every attempt was made by the researcher to maximize the reliability of the recorded observations. Lutz and Iannaccone (1969:124) suggested that once reliability is established, validity is not so much a question in field observations. They stated:

> As Kerlinger has said when writing about the field study method, "There is no complaint of artificiality here." The observer is viewing the actual behavior. He is not one step away from the behavior as is the case when tests are used to measure perceptions of behavior. Rather, the field observer is looking at the actual behavior. In this method, if the data are reliable, they are usually valid.

Reliability measures used. Another researcher watching the same behaviors might well produce a different kind of analysis, however, a number of measures were adopted in this study to increase its reliability. First, the researcher used systematic recording and coding procedures, adapted from Mintzberg (1973). Second, the researcher conducted pilot observations and interviews with two superintendents to test the appropriateness of the recording and coding techniques and the interview questions. Third, the researcher defined the unit of behavior for the study and the specific dimensions of this unit were established for recording purposes. Fourth, the researcher, through interviews and impromptu meetings, checked his interpretation of events with each superintendent. Fifth, much of the data was generated through low inference level observations and these findings were used to test the propositions derived from the theoretical notes and the categories of purpose. Finally, in the role of observer as non-participant, the researcher tried to maintain objectivity and minimize bias in interpretation of the data.

Validity measures used. The development of theoretical notes provided the researcher with the opportunity to check and recheck his conclusions and interpretations. In addition, as explained in an earlier section, the researcher tried to minimize the effects of his presence as much as possible. Conclusions and propositions were reached through a process of what McCutcheon (1978:12) referred to as "structured corroboration." She suggested that using this process "many facts are shown to support one another in agreement about a particular conclusion. A fabric of interrelated facts, anecdotes, quotes and other bits of information is woven." This use of many items of evidence, together with a wide range of evidence, allowed for interpretations to be made with a greater degree of confidence.

Chapter 4

DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATIONAL DATA

This chapter presents an analysis of the data generated through the observation of eight Alberta superintendents for a total period of 30 days. More specifically, the chapter deals with the chronology of activities engaged in, and the proportions of the total working time devoted to each category of activity, for each of the eight superintendents. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first section provides an overview of the total time devoted by each superintendent to the seven major categories of activities. The second section outlines the proportions of each superintendent's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities. The third section provides a detailed breakdown of the data for each category of activity for all eight superintendents. This section also provides a comparative analysis of the percentage of total working time spent on each category of activity for all eight superintendents. The fourth section presents a description, based on aggregate and composite scores for all eight superintendents, of how "the typical superintendent" spent his working time. The final section presents a synthesis of the significant findings as presented in Chapter 4.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Total Times Devoted to Seven Major Categories of Activities

Table 4 presents an overview of the way in which each superintendent spent his time during the period of observation. Superintendents A and B were observed for two days each and Superintendent C through H were observed for five days each, for a total observational period of 34 days. Superintendent C and Superintendent H spent one day and three days each, respectively, away from their school systems attending conferences. These absences amounted to nine hours for Superintendent C and 27.5 hours for Superintendent H, giving them net totals of 30.4 hours and 17.1 hours, respectively, when they were present in their systems and "available" to those who wished to make demands on their time. These net totals were used throughout the remainder of this chapter as bases for the calculations of the proportions of working time spent by each of these superintendents on the seven major categories of activities identified in Table 4 (unscheduled meetings, scheduled meetings, desk work, telephone calls, travel within system, evening meetings, and tours and visits).

An examination of the data in Table 4 shows that the total hours worked by each superintendent varied considerably. The average hours worked per day varied from a high of 10.05 hours for Superintendent D to a low of 7.05 hours for Superintendent B. The figures in Table 4 do not project a clear pattern with regard to the proportions of total working time spent by each superintendent on each of the seven major categories of activities. While the four categories: (1) time in unscheduled meetings; (2) time in scheduled meetings;

Table 4

Analysis of the Number and Types of Activities on Which Each Superintendent Spent His Time

Number of Activities/Categories of Activities/Time Spent on Activities	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total Hours Worked[1]	15.40	14.15	39.40	50.20	42.50	38.30	35.80	44.60
Average Hours Worked per Day	7.70	7.05	7.90	10.05	8.50	7.65	7.15	8.90
Total Hours Minus Conferences[2]	15.40	14.15	30.40	50.20	42.50	38.30	35.80	17.10
Time at Conferences	-	-	9.00	-	-	-	-	27.50
Time in Unscheduled Meetings (hours)	4.45	3.10	10.05	13.20	7.50	9.20	9.15	3.90
Time in Scheduled Meetings (hours)	1.25	2.75	6.05	16.70	4.75	14.00	7.00	5.80
Time at Desk Work (hours)	1.45	5.10	4.30	7.90	10.55	6.20	8.20	5.10
Time on Telephone Calls[3] (hours)	2.30	1.80	3.40	1.35	6.55	3.55	6.15	1.55
Time on Travel Within System (hours)	2.65	.55	4.15	3.00	2.85	3.05	3.45	.90
Time in Evening Meetings (hours)	1.00	-	-	5.55	8.00	2.15	-	-
Time on Tours and Visits[4] (hours)	2.30	.85	2.45	2.50	2.30	.15	1.85	.25
Total Number of Activities	82	78	117	153	227	184	246	66
Average Number of Activities per Day	41	39	29	31	45	37	49	33

[1] Superintendents A and B were observed for two (2) days each; Superintendents C,D,E,F,G,H, for five (5) days each.

[2] Superintendent C spent <u>one</u> (1) day away from his jurisdiction at a conference and Superintendent H spent <u>three</u> (3) days away at a conference. All proportions of time reported for various activities <u>do not include</u> these days in their calculation. It was felt that including only the time he was accessible and available would provide a clearer picture of the demands made on a superintendent's time.

[3] Telephone calls screened or made by the secretary are excluded.

[4] Tours and visits include formal classroom visits as well as informal visits to schools and quick walks to 'check' on things at central office.

(3) time at desk work; and (4) time on the telephone accounted for a large proportion of each superintendent's working time--on average approximately 80 per cent--the total time spent on each varied greatly among the eight superintendents. For example, Superintendent D spent over 16 hours in scheduled meetings and approximately 1.5 hours on the telephone, while the respective figures for Superintendent G were seven hours and approximately six hours. The data for Superintendent C and Superintendent E presented in Table 4 provide further evidence of this variation in total time devoted to different activities. Superintendent C spent over 10 hours in unscheduled meetings, and just over four hours working at his desk, while Superintendent E spent 7.5 hours involved in unscheduled meetings and 10.55 hours working at his desk.

The total number of activities engaged in by each superintendent showed a considerable range, from a high of 246 for Superintendent G over five days of observation to a low of 153 for Superintendent D over the same length of time. The average number of activities per day for each superintendent also differed markedly from a high of 49 activities for Superintendent G to a low of 29 activities for Superintendent C. Despite the variation in numbers of activities, each superintendent's day was characterized by an involvement in a large number and variety of activities.

How Each Superintendent Spent His Time Among the Major Categories of Activities

Figures 6 through 13 provide an analysis of the proportion of total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities for each superintendent.

Superintendent A. Figure 6 presents the percentages of Superintendent A's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

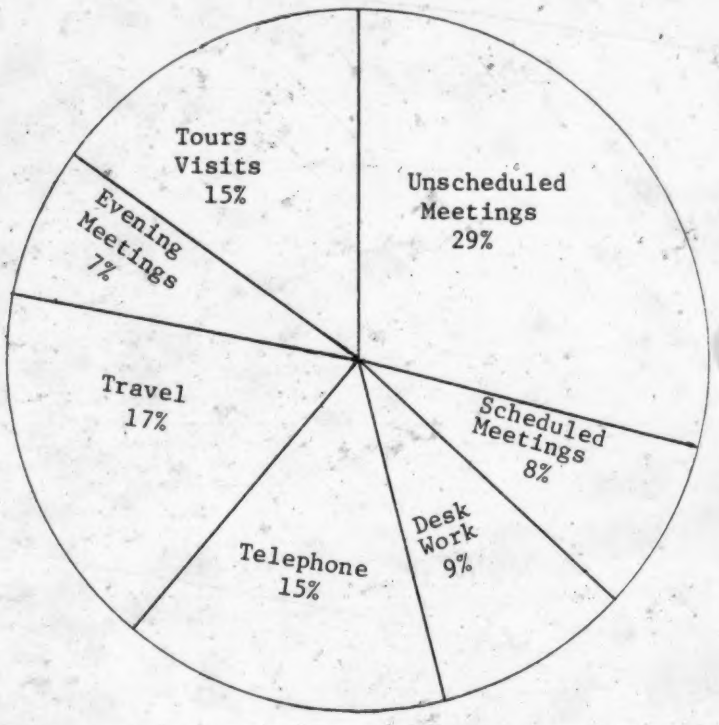

Figure 6

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent A

Superintendent A spent 29 per cent of his time involved in unscheduled meetings. These were unplanned meetings in the sense that they were characterized as being hastily organized, spur-of-the-moment gatherings, or even chance encounters. The category of activity that made the next highest demand on his time was travel at 17 per cent, followed by telephone calls and tours and visits at 15 per cent each. Desk work, scheduled meetings, and evening meetings followed with 9 per cent, 8 per cent, and 7 per cent, respectively.

Superintendent B. Figure 7 presents the percentages of Superintendent B's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

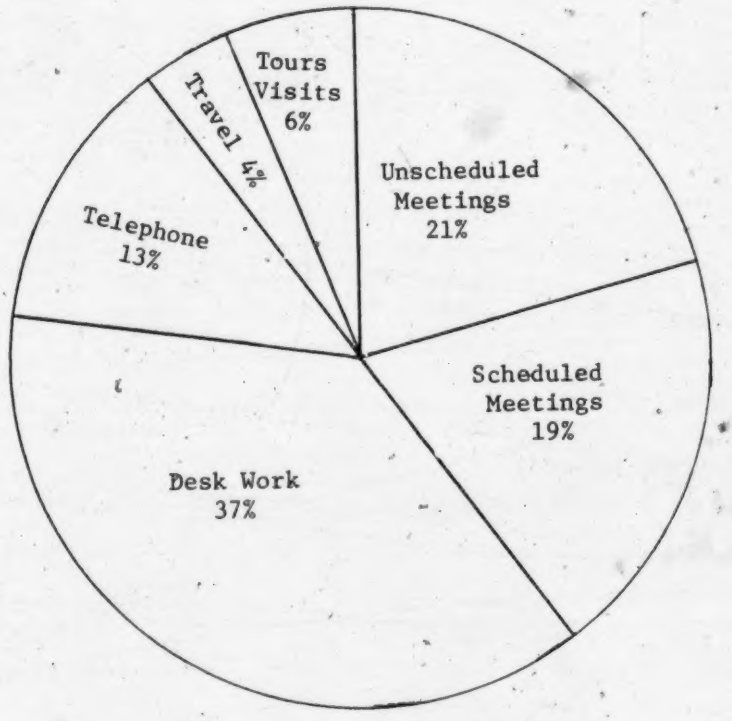

Figure 7

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent B

By far the largest proportion of Superintendent B's time, 37 per cent, was spent at desk work (working on mail, writing reports, and other forms of paper work). Unscheduled meetings took 21 per cent of his time, while scheduled meetings at 19 per cent and telephone at 13 per cent took the next highest proportions. He spent 6 per cent of his working time on tours and visits, 4 per cent on travel within his system, and he had no evening meeting.

Superintendent C. Figure 8 presents the percentages of Superintendent C's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

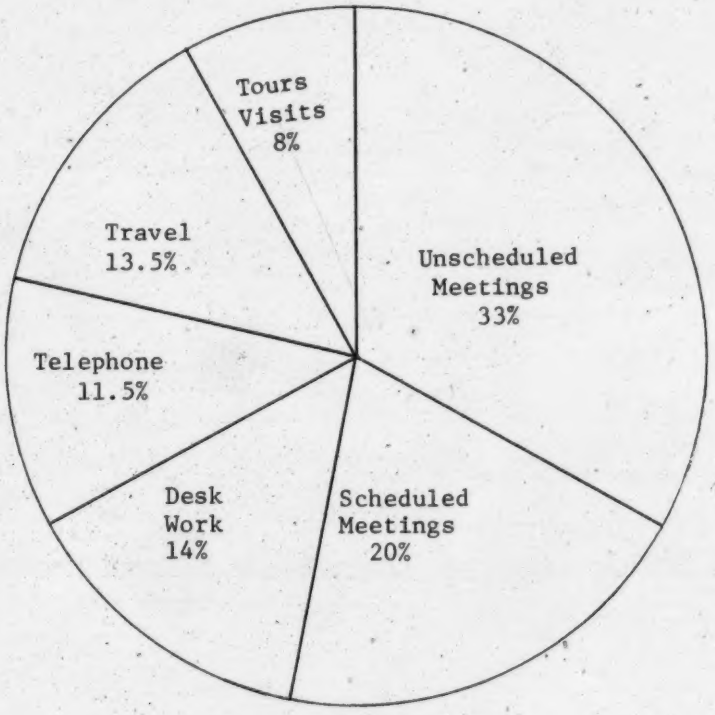

Figure 8

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent C

Superintendent C devoted 33 per cent of his total working time to unscheduled meetings, 20 per cent to scheduled meetings, 14 per cent to desk work, and 13.5 per cent to travel. Telephone calls took up to 11.5 per cent of his time, followed by tours and visits with 8 per cent. Superintendent C did not attend any evening meeting during the period of observation.

Superintendent D. Figure 9 presents the percentages of Superintendent D's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

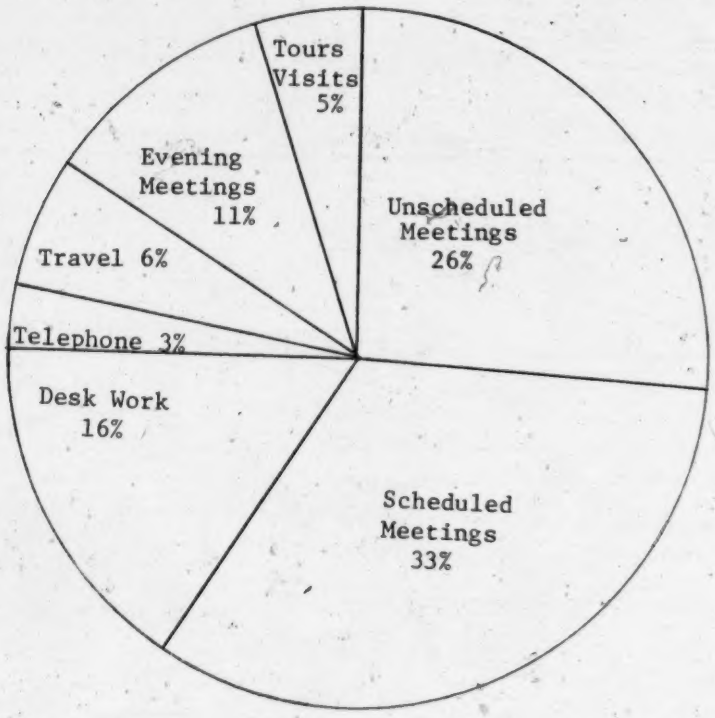

Figure 9

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent D

Superintendent D spent 33 per cent of his working time in scheduled meetings, followed in order by unscheduled meetings with 26 per cent, desk work with 16 per cent, evening meetings with 11 per cent, travel within his system with 6 per cent, tours and visits with 5 per cent, and telephone calls with a low 3 per cent. The small proportion of time spent on the telephone by Superintendent D can be attributed to the fact that his secretary, on his orders, screened his calls very closely and redirected a majority of them to his assistants.

Superintendent E. Figure 10 presents the percentages of Superintendent E's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

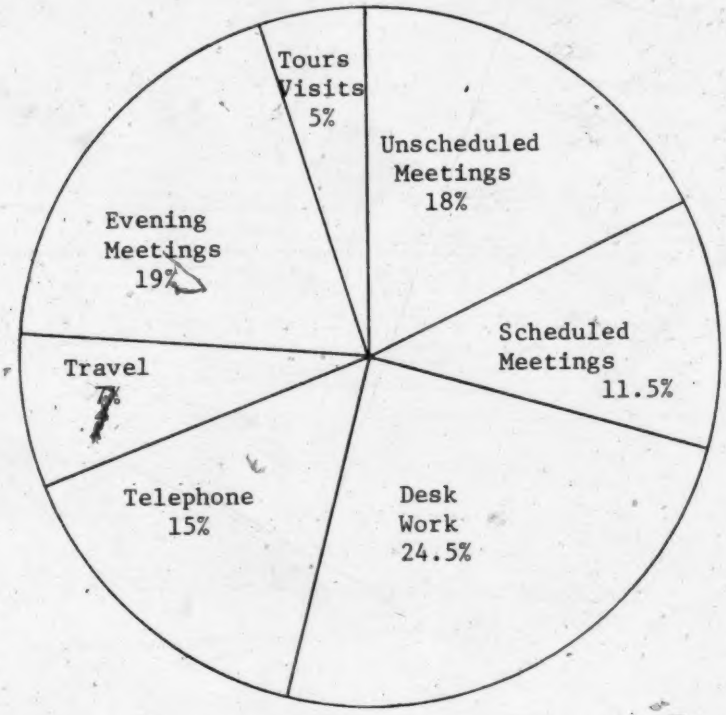

Figure 10

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent E

As was the case with Superintendent B, Superintendent E spent more time at desk work, 24.5 per cent, than at any other category of activity. He spent a greater proportion of his time at evening meetings than any other superintendent, 19 per cent, and this was followed in order by unscheduled meetings with 18 per cent, telephone calls with 15 per cent, scheduled meetings with 11.5 per cent, travel with 7 per cent, and tours and visits with 5 per cent.

Superintendent F. Figure 11 presents the percentages of Superintendent F's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

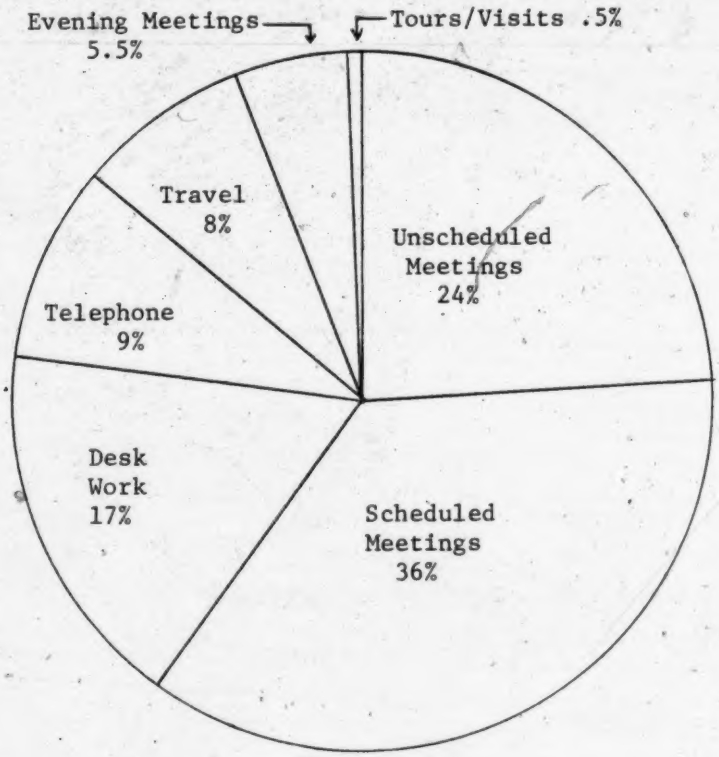

Figure 11

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent F

Scheduled meetings, with 36 per cent, accounted for the largest single segment of working time for Superintendent F. This was followed by unscheduled meetings with 24 per cent, desk work with 17 per cent, telephone calls with 9 per cent, travel within his system with 8 per cent, and evening meetings with 5.5 per cent. He devoted only one-half of one per cent during the period of observation to the category tours and visits.

Superintendent G. Figure 12 presents the percentages of Superintendent G's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

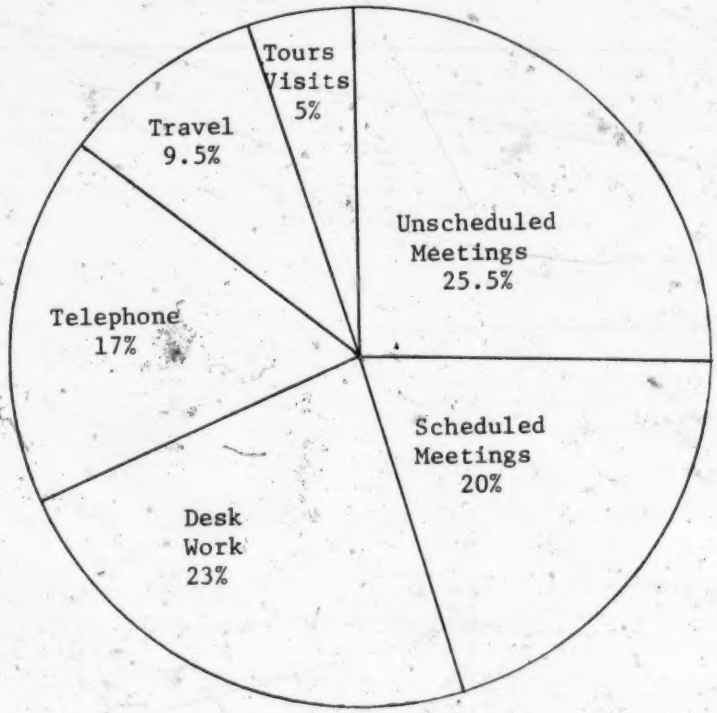

Figure 12

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent G

Superintendent G spent approximately one-quarter, or 25.5 per cent, of his total working time in unscheduled meetings. Desk work with 23 per cent and scheduled meetings with 20 per cent were next in terms of time spent. Telephone calls took up 17 per cent of his working time, travel took 9.5 per cent, and tours and visits accounted for 5 per cent. Superintendent G did not attend any evening meetings during the period of observation.

Superintendent H. Figure 13 presents the percentages of Superintendent H's total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities.

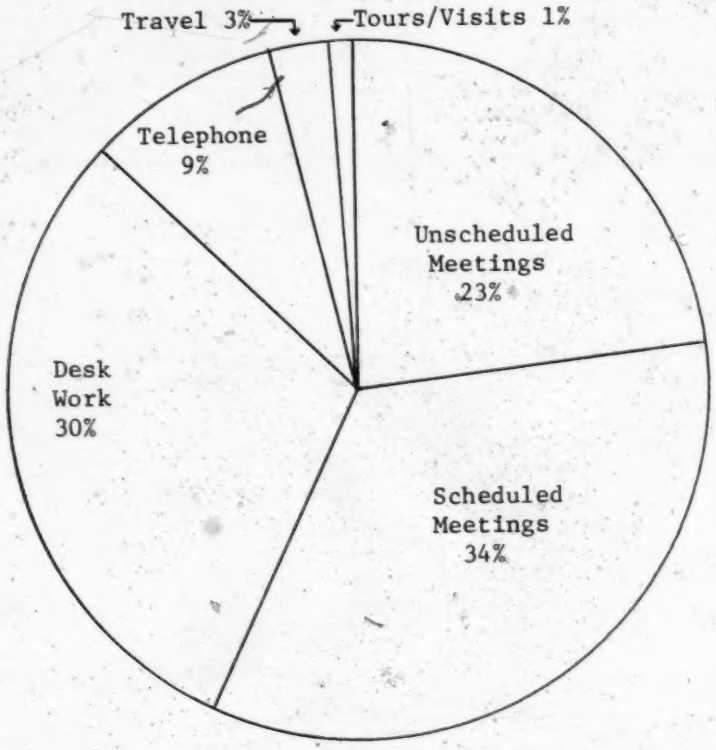

Figure 13

Proportions of Total Working Time Devoted to the Seven Major Categories of Activities by Superintendent H

Superintendent H spent 34 per cent of his total working time in scheduled meetings, 30 per cent at desk work, and 23 per cent in unscheduled meetings. Telephone calls accounted for 9 per cent of his working time while travel within his system, and tours and visits, took up 3 per cent and 1 per cent, respectively, of his time.

A more detailed analysis of the way in which each superintendent distributed his total working time among the seven major categories of activities is presented in the following section--Tables 5 through 10. In addition, Figures 14 through 20 provide a comparative analysis of the proportions of working time devoted to each major activity for all eight superintendents.

Analysis of the Data for Each Category of Activity

Unscheduled meetings. Table 5 presents the data for the time spent by each of the eight superintendents in unscheduled meetings, i.e., those meetings arranged on the spur-of-the-moment, or others that could be more properly classified as chance encounters.

Table 5

Analysis of the Time Spent in Unscheduled Meetings by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Unscheduled Meetings	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Meetings	22	20	39	75	68	49	64	16
Average Number per Day	11.0	10.0	9.7	15.0	13.6	9.8	12.8	8.0
Time in Meetings (hours)	4.45	3.10	10.05	13.20	7.50	9.20	9.15	3.90
Average Duration (minutes)	12.1	9.3	15.5	10.6	6.6	11.3	8.6	14.6

The average number of unscheduled meetings per day for each superintendent varied from a high of 15 for Superintendent D to a low of eight for Superintendent H. The average length of each unscheduled meeting also varied widely among the superintendents from a high of 15.5 minutes per meeting for Superintendent C to a low of 6.6 minutes per meeting for Superintendent E.

Figure 14 presents a comparison of the percentage of total working time each superintendent spent in unscheduled meetings. The percentages in Figure 14 show that Superintendent C spent a greater proportion of his time, 33 per cent, in unscheduled meetings than did any other superintendent. Superintendent E, with 18 per cent, had the lowest percentage figure for this category of activity.

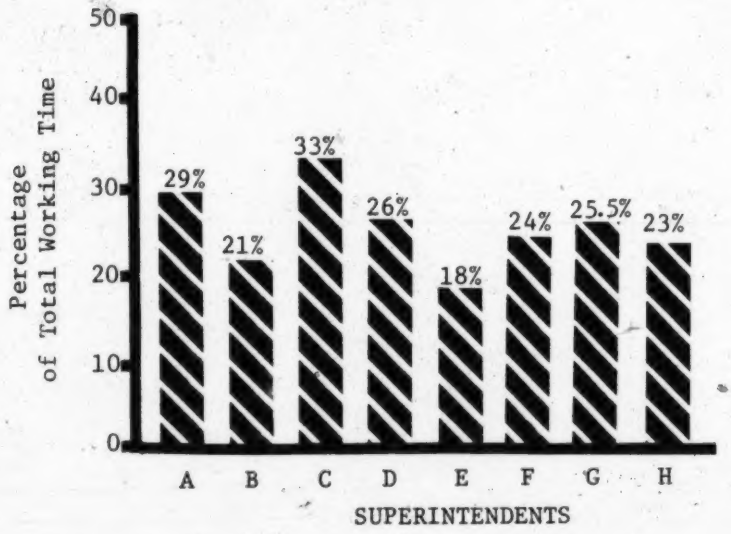

Figure 14

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent in Unscheduled Meetings

Scheduled meetings. Table 6 presents the data on the time spent by each superintendent in scheduled meetings, i.e., those meetings which were arranged at least 30 minutes in advance.

Table 6

Analysis of the Time Spent in Scheduled Meetings by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Scheduled Meetings	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Meetings	2	8	5	11	6	17	13	2
Average Number per Day	1.0	4.0	1.2	2.2	1.2	3.4	2.6	1.0
Time in Meetings (hours)	1.25	2.75	6.05	16.70	4.75	14.00	7.00	5.80
Average Duration (minutes)	37.5	20.6	72.6	91.1	47.5	49.4	32.3	174.0

The average daily number of scheduled meetings showed a fair degree of consistency among the eight superintendents, from a high of four for Superintendent B to a low of one for Superintendents A and H. The average duration of each scheduled meeting, however, showed a wide degree of variation among the eight superintendents, from a high of 2.9 hours each meeting for Superintendent H to a low of just over 20 minutes each meeting for Superintendent B.

Figure 15 presents the percentages for the proportion of total working time each superintendent spent in scheduled meetings.

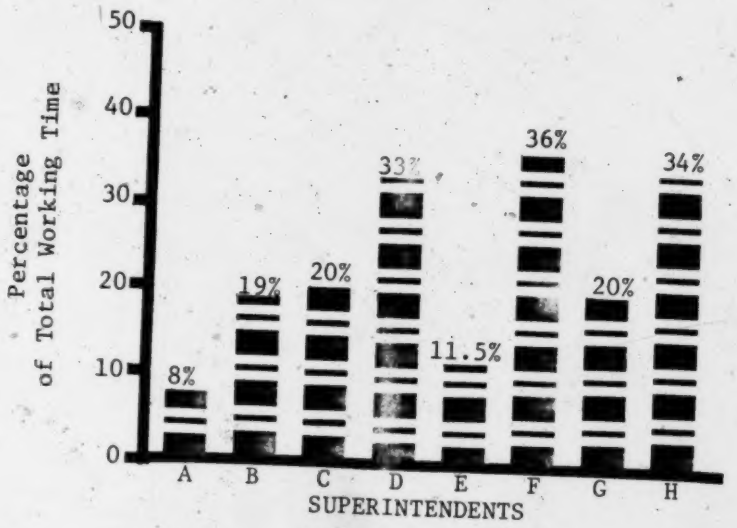

Figure 15

A Comparison of the Percentages of Time Spent by Each Superintendent in Scheduled Meetings

Superintendents D, F, and H each spent, approximately, one-third of their total working time involved in scheduled meetings. Superintendents B, C, and G each spent, approximately, one-fifth of their working time on this same activity. Superintendent E, with 11.5 per cent, and Superintendent A, with 8 per cent, had the lowest percentages, among the eight superintendents, devoted to scheduled meetings.

Desk work. Table 7 gives the data for the number of times each superintendent spent at his desk and the average length of these sessions. The average number of sessions per day at desk varied among the superintendents, from a high of over 13 for Superintendent G to a low of 5 for Superintendent A. The average length of these sessions also varied considerably, from a high of 19.1 minutes each session for Superintendent B to a low of 7.3 minutes each session for Superintendent G.

Table 7

Analysis of the Time Spent at Desk Work by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Desk Work	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Sessions	10	16	22	40	64	49	67	25
Average Number per Day	5.0	8.0	5.5	8.0	12.8	9.8	13.4	12.5
Time at Desk Work (hours)	1.45	5.10	4.30	7.90	10.55	6.20	8.20	5.10
Average Duration (minutes)	8.7	19.1	11.7	11.8	9.9	7.6	7.3	12.2

Figure 16 provides a comparative view of the percentage of total working time spent by each superintendent working at his desk.

Figure 16 shows that Superintendent B spent 37 per cent of his time at his desk while the respective percentage for Superintendent A was 9 per cent. The other superintendents varied from 14 per cent for Superintendent C to 30 per cent for Superintendent H.

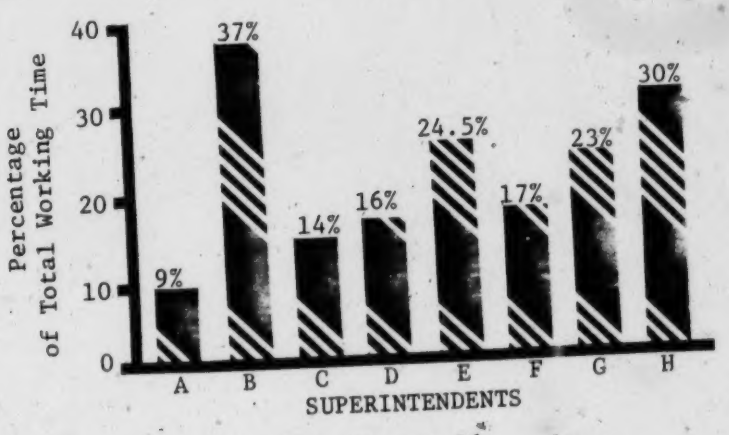

Figure 16

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent Working at His Desk

Telephone calls. The data presented in Table 8 gives a detailed description of the time spent by each superintendent on the telephone.

Table 8

Analysis of the Time Spent on the Telephone by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Telephone Calls	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Calls	34	29	30	13	64	54	87	20
Average Number per Day	17.0	14.5	7.5	2.60	12.6	10.8	17.2	10.0
Time on Telephone (hours)	2.30	1.80	3.40	1.35	6.55	3.55	6.15	1.55
Average Duration (minutes)	4.0	3.7	6.8	6.2	6.1	3.9	4.2	4.6

The total number of telephone calls (both placed and received by the superintendent) for each superintendent shows a degree of variation. Superintendent G was on the telephone on 87 different occasions over a five day period, while Superintendent D was involved in only 13 telephone calls over five days. The average number of telephone calls per day also shows a similar pattern; Superintendents A and G were each on the telephone 17 times each day, while Superintendent D was involved only three times each day and Superintendent C, eight times. The average length of each telephone call, however, showed a degree of consistency among the superintendents, varying from 6.8 minutes per call for Superintendent C to 3.7 minutes per call for Superintendents A, B, F, and G.

The percentage of each superintendent's total working time spent on the telephone is presented in Figure 17.

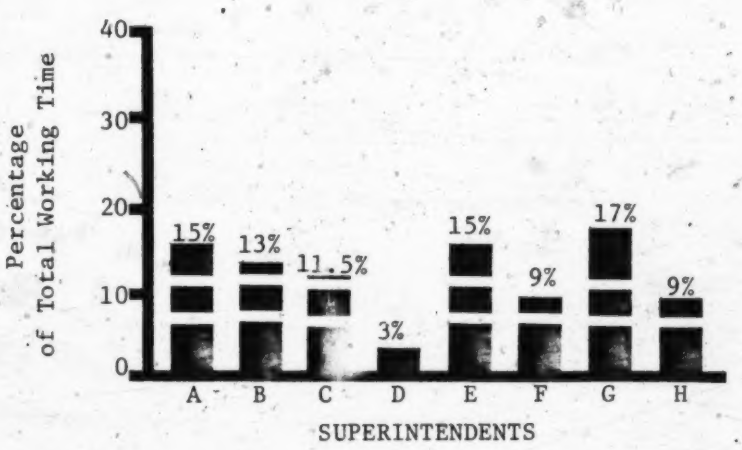

Figure 17

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent on the Telephone

Superintendent G spent 17 per cent of his time--a higher proportion than for any other superintendent--on the telephone. Superintendents A and E talked on the telephone for 15 per cent of their working time while Superintendent D, at 3 per cent, spent the smallest proportion of working time on the phone.

Travel within the system. The data on the amount of time spent by each of the superintendents travelling within their systems are presented in Table 9.

All of the superintendents spent some time travelling to various locations within their jurisdictions. While most of the trips were to schools to visit principals and teachers or to present awards, other trips were made for such reasons as to observe building

developments, to evaluate the repairs necessary for a closed-down school, to learn more about the problems of a home for delinquent children, and to attend evening meetings. The term trips includes only time spent in travel; time spent in the schools is included in the category tours and visits.

Table 9

Analysis of the Time Spent on Travel Within Their Systems by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Travel Within System[1]	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Trips	6	1	12	6	9	12	11	1
Average Number per Day	3.0	0.5	3.0	1.2	1.8	2.4	2.2	0.5
Total Time on Travel (hours)	2.65	0.55	4.15	3.00	2.85	3.05	3.45	0.50
Average Duration of Trips (minutes)	26.5	33.0	20.7	30.0	19.0	15.2	18.8	30.0

[1] Only Superintendents C and H travelled outside their systems and these figures do not include such trips.

Superintendents C and F made 12 trips each and Superintendent G was involved in 11 such trips. The average duration of the trips varied from 15.2 minutes for Superintendent F to 33 minutes for Superintendent B.

The percentage of total working time spent by each superintendent travelling within his system varied considerably. Figure 18 provides a comparative view of the extent of these variations.

Superintendent A spent 17 per cent of his working time (only unscheduled meetings with 29 per cent took up a greater proportion of his working time) travelling within his system while Superintendent C devoted 13.5 per cent of his working time to this same activity. Superintendents B, D, E, F, G, and H all spent less than 10 per cent of their working time travelling within their systems.

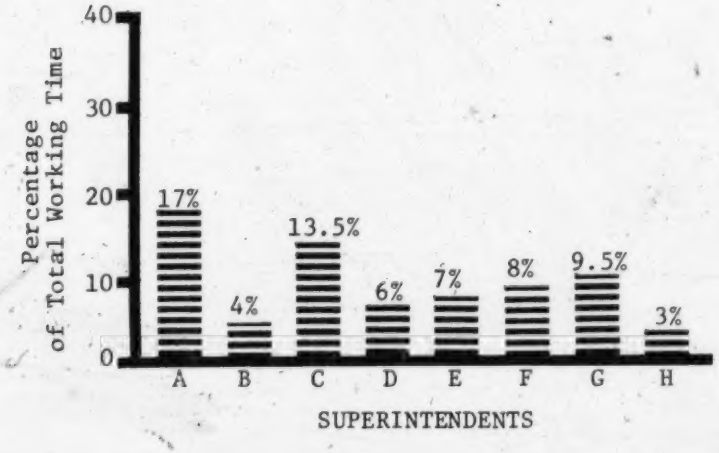

Figure 18

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent on Travel Within His System

Evening meetings. Evening meetings consisted, primarily, of regular meetings with school boards and curriculum development meetings with school-based administrators and teachers. The data on the amount of time spent by each superintendent are presented in Table 10.

Superintendents A, D, E, and F attended meetings after their regular working hours. Superintendent E spent the most time at these meetings (8 hours) and the average length of his meetings were also the longest, at 2.7 hours each.

Table 10

Analysis of the Time Spent in Evening Meetings by Eight Albert Superintendents

Evening Meetings	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Sessions	1	-	-	3	3	2	-	-
Average Number per Day	0.5	-	-	0.6	0.6	0.4	-	-
Time on Evening Meetings (hours)	1.0	-	-	5.55	8.00	2.15	-	-
Average Duration (hours)	1.0	-	-	1.8	2.7	1.1	-	-

The percentage of total working time spent by each superintendent attending evening meetings is presented in Figure 19.

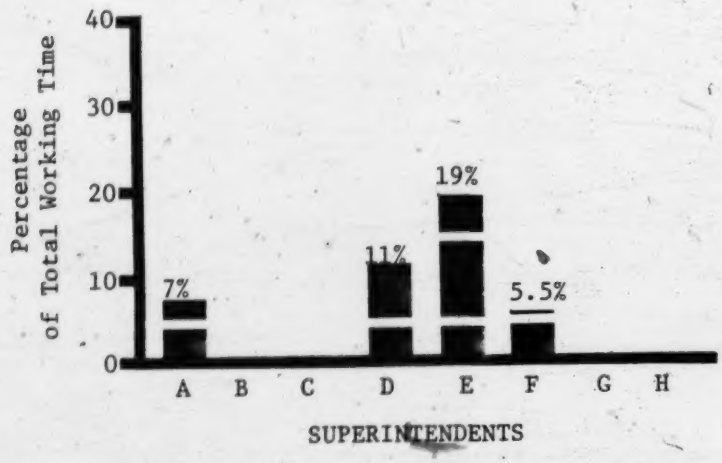

Figure 19

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent in Evening Meetings

Superintendent E spent 19 per cent of his total working time in evening meetings. The percentages of total working time devoted to evening meetings for Superintendents D, A, and F were 11 per cent, 7 per cent, and 5.5 per cent, respectively.

Tours and visits. All of the eight superintendents spent some time away from their offices either observing such things as housing developments or the suitability of potential school sites, or visiting schools in their systems. The data for the time spent on these tours and visits are presented in Table 11.

The number of tours and visits taken by each superintendent varied considerably. Superintendent E made 13 such trips over a five day period and Superintendent A made seven in a period of two days. On the other hand, Superintendent F made only one tour/visit in a five day period. The average length of these activities also differed markedly, from a high of 30 minutes for Superintendent D to a low of 7.5 minutes for Superintendent H.

Table 11

Analysis of the Time Spent on Tours and Visits by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Tours and Visits	Superintendents							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Number of Tours/Visits	7	4	9	5	13	1	4	2
Average Number per Day	3.5	2.0	2.2	1.0	2.6	0.2	.8	1.0
Time on Tours/Visits (hours)	2.30	0.85	2.45	2.50	2.30	0.15	1.85	0.25
Average Duration (minutes)	19.7	12.7	16.3	30.0	10.6	9.0	27.7	7.5

The percentage of tota orking time devoted to tours and visits by each superintendent presented in Figure 20.

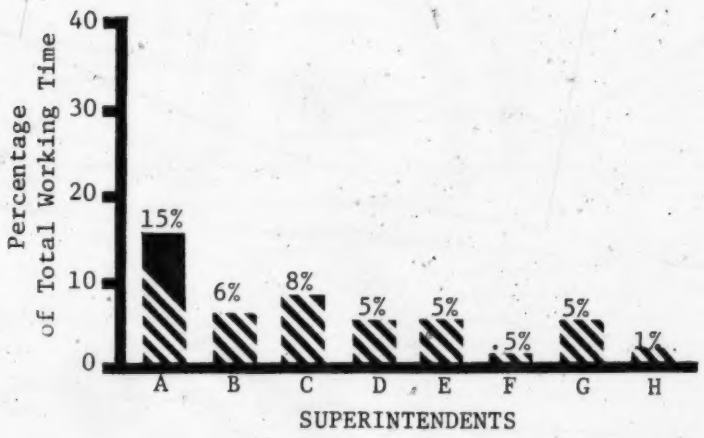

Figure 20

A Comparison of the Percentage of Time Spent by Each Superintendent on Tours and Visits

Superintendent A devoted 15 per cent of his time to tours and visits. This was approximately twice the percentage of total working time devoted to this activity by any superintendent and reflected Superintendent A's belief that a superintendent should "get to know his teachers well."

How Eight Alberta Superintendents Spent Their Working Time: A Composite Picture

The data presented so far in Chapter 4 have shown how each superintendent spent his time in relation to the seven major categories of activities and, in addition, some comparisons have been drawn among the eight superintendents with regard to the distribution of their time among those activities.

This section presents eries of data which provide an overview of how the "typical supe tendent," from the group of eight observed, spent his working t . While it is not possible to generalize from this small sample eight to the whole population of Alberta superintendents, the omposite picture" provides some insight into, and may in many ways ap oximate, the characteristics of the typical Alberta superintende 's day-to-day work.

Table 12 presents agg egate data for the way in which the eight superintendents together divided their working time among the seven major categories of activities. An examination of the data in Table 12 shows a ranking of the various categories of activities in terms of the demand they made on the superintendents' time. Most time was spent in unscheduled meetings (60.55 hours), with scheduled meetings a close second with a total time of 58.3 hours.

Table 12

An Aggregate Analysis of How Eight Alberta Superintendents Spent Their Working Time

Category of Activity	Total Number of Activities	Total Time on Each Category	Average Duration of Each Category
Unscheduled Meetings	353	60.55 hours	10.3 minutes
Scheduled Meetings	64	58.30 hours	54.6 minutes
Desk Work	293	48.80 hours	10.0 minutes
Telephone Calls	331	26.65 hours	4.8 minutes
Travel Within System	58	20.20 hours	20.9 minutes
Evening Meetings	9	16.70 hours	111.3 minutes
Tours and Visits	45	12.65 hours	16.9 minutes

However, scheduled mee gs were considerably fewer in number (64 versus 353) and much longe in duration (on average 54.6 minutes versus 10.3 minutes) than the nscheduled meetings. Time spent at their desks, which involved p narily written work such as writing letters and reports or readir mail, proved to take up the next greatest proportion of the su erintendents' time (48.8 hours). Altogether the eight superintende ts had a total of 293 sessions at their desks and each session lasted on average 10 minutes. The superintendents were involved i 331 phone calls for a total of 26.65 hours with each call lasting on average just under five minutes.

The fifth ranking activity, in terms of demands made on their working time, proved to be the travelling that they undertook within their systems. They made 58 trips for a total of 20.2 hours with each trip averaging just over 20 minutes. Although the superintendents were involved in only nine evening meetings, those meetings were long, averaging close to two hours each for a total time of 16.7 hours. Tours and visits, with 12.65 hours, took up the least amount of total time. The superintendents were involved in 45 such activities, each lasting on average 16.9 minutes.

Table 13 presents the aggregate data on the total number of activities and the time spent on them by the superintendents.

During the 34 days of observation the superintendents averaged 8.2 hours a day on their jobs for a total working time of 280.35 hours. This latter figure includes the time that the superintendents spent attending meetings after their regular working days were over. Taking away the 36.5 hours that Superintendents C and H were

away attending conferences, thi leaves 243.85 hours over a 30-day period during which the superi ndents were working within their systems. In terms of average urs per day this means that the superintendents averaged just er eight hours per day on the job.

able 13

Total Number of Activi es and the Time Spent on Those Activities by Eig Alberta Superintendents

Total Hours Worked	280.35
Average Hours per Day	8.20
Total Hours Minus Conferences	243.85
Total Hours at Conferences	36.50[1]
Total Number of Activities	1,153[2]
Average Number of Activities per Day	38
Average Length of Each Activity (minutes)	12.68

[1]Superintendent C attended a one-day conference, and Superintendent H a three-day conference during the week of observation.

[2]Does not include conference days of Superintendents C and H.

The superintendents were involved in a total of 1,153 activities over the 30 days when they were working within their systems. The superintendents each took part in an average of 38 activities per day and the average length of each activity was 12.68 minutes. Figures presented later in this chapter, however, will show that the large percentage of activities in which the superintendents were involved each lasted for a much shorter period than 12 minutes.

The composite picture of how the eight superintendents apportioned their time among the seven major categories of activities

is presented in Figure 21.

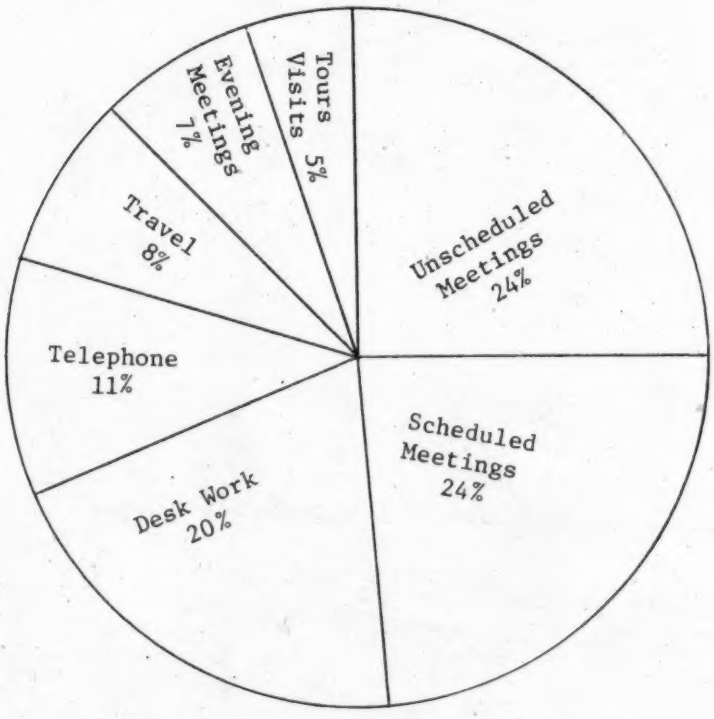

Figure 21

A Composite View of the Proportion of Time Devoted to Each Category of Activity by the Eight Superintendents

Figure 21 shows that the superintendents spent one-quarter of their working time involved in unscheduled meetings and approximately the same proportion of their time (25 per cent) in scheduled meetings. One-fifth (20 per cent) of their total hours was spent sitting at their desks involved in paper work, and another 11 per cent was spent on the phone. They spent 8 per cent of their working hours travelling to various places within their systems, while evening meetings and

tours and visits took up 7 per cent and 5 per cent of their time, respectively.

A major characteristic of the superintendent's working day was his involvement in a great number and variety of activities; activities which were generally of short duration. Table 14 presents percentages which highlight this aspect of the superintendent's job.

Table 14

Percentage Distribution of the Superintendent's Activities by Duration (in minutes)

Minutes	Percentage of Total Activities	Cumulative Percentage
0 - 5	39	39
5.1 - 10	26	65
10.1 - 30	27	92
30.1 - 60	5	97
60.1 and over	3	100

The percentages in Table 14 show that the superintendent's work was characterized by involvement in activities that were generally of short duration. Sixty-five percent of all the activities in which the superintendent was involved lasted ten minutes or less, and 39 per cent of all his activities lasted five minutes or less. Only 8 per cent of the superintendent's activities lasted longer than 30 minutes, and 3 per cent lasted longer than 60 minutes each.

SUMMARY

The data presented in Chapter 4 have provided a "macro" view of the way in which each of the eight superintendents spent his time during the period of observation. The data for individual superintendents do not provide a clear-cut, consistent pattern with regard to the proportion of time devoted to the seven major categories of activities. However, the categories labelled unscheduled meetings, scheduled meetings, desk work, and telephone calls together account for close to 80 per cent of each superintendent's working time (except Superintendent A and E with 61 per cent and 68.5 per cent, respectively). Composite figures have been presented that give a picture of the superintendent's work in relation to the seven major categories of activities according to the proportion of each superintendent's time devoted to each. Unscheduled meetings consumed the most time for the "composite" superintendent (25 per cent), followed by scheduled meetings with 24 per cent, desk work with 20 per cent, telephone calls with 11 per cent, travel within the system with 8 per cent, evening meetings with 7 per cent, and tours and visits with 5 per cent.

The data in Table 13 and Table 14 showed that a superintendent's work was characterized by involvement in a great number of activities--an average of 38 activities per day. Table 14 showed that 65 per cent of all the activities engaged in by the superintendent lasted ten minutes or less and 39 per cent of all activities lasted five minutes or less.

Chapter 5

THE SUPERINTENDENT'S VERBAL AND WRITTEN CONTACTS: A DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA FOR EIGHT ALBERTA SUPERINTENDENTS

This chapter presents a more detailed, or micro, view of the way in which the superintendent spent his time. Data are presented on the number and nature of the verbal and written contacts in which the superintendents were involved. These data provide a fuller understanding of such aspects of the superintendent's work as: (1) with whom he was involved; (2) where the contacts occurred; (3) who initiated the contacts; and (4) why, or for what specific purpose(s) the contacts were initiated.

The chapter is divided into six sections. The first section provides an overview of the total number of contacts in which the superintendents were involved, the media used in these interactions, and the proportions of working time devoted to each medium. The second section presents data on the categories of people with whom the superintendent interacted in his everyday work and the time he spent with each group. In addition, this section provides details on who initiated such contacts, where the interactions took place, and how many participants were involved in the activities. Part three provides a description of the purposes for which the various contacts were initiated. The first part of section three presents the data in the form used by Mintzberg (1973) in his study. The second part of the section presents a view of

the data using a number of categories proposed by the researcher. The fourth section describes the superintendent's involvement with both the incoming and outgoing mail. This section provides details on: (1) who initiated the mail; (2) what was the purpose of the mail's content; and (3) how the mail was processed. The fifth section presents a comparative analysis of selected data for county and division/district superintendents. The final section presents a synthesis of the significant findings as presented in Chapter 5.

THE VERBAL CONTACT RECORD OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

An Overview

The figures in the composite column in Table 15 show that the eight superintendents, together, spent approximately 70 per cent of their working time in verbal contact with other people. The individual statistics for each superintendent support this high contact aspect of the superintendent's work. Superintendent F spent a greater proportion of his time in verbal interaction, 74.2 per cent, than did any other superintendent, but even Superintendent B, with the lowest percentage figure, spent over 58 per cent of his working time in verbal interaction with other people. Each day the eight superintendents were involved, on average, in 26 verbal contacts. Superintendent A, with 33, had the largest average number of contacts each day, and Superintendent H had the smallest average number with 19.

Table 15 shows that the greatest number of verbal contacts for all the superintendents took place through the medium of unscheduled meetings (45.5 per cent of all contacts), but almost as great a proportion of such contacts were conducted over the telephone (42.5 per

Table 15

Analysis of the Number of Contacts Made, the Media Used in These Contacts And the Time Devoted to Each by Eight Alberta Superintendents

Category	Composite	Superintendents							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Total Time in Verbal Contact	169.35 hrs.	11.06	8.23	21.63	37.13	27.75	28.43	23.66	11.45
Total Number of Verbal Contacts	777	66	59	81	104	144	122	163	38
Proportion of Total Time (Minus conferences)	69.4	71.7	58.1	71.2	74	65.3	74.2	66.1	66.8
Average Number of Contacts per day	26	33	30	20	21	29	24	32	19
MEDIA: Per cent of Total Contacts/Per cent of Contact Time[1]									
Telephone Calls	42.5/16	51.5/20.5	49/22	37/15.5	12.5/3.5	44.5/23.5	44.5/12	52/26	52.5/14
Scheduled Meetings[2]	9.5/44	4.5/18.5	13.5/34.5	6/28	12.5/60	6/46.5	14/56	8/29	5.5/51
Unscheduled Meetings	45.5/36	33.5/40.5	34/37.5	48/46.5	72/35.5	47.5/27	40.5/32	39/38	42/35
Tours/Visits[3]	3.0/4	10.5/20.5	3.5/6	9/10	3/1	2/3	1/-	1.7	-/-

[1] Percentages are calculated to the nearest .5 of one per cent.

[2] This category includes evening meetings as reported in Table 4, page 89.

[3] No contact was made on some of the tours reported in Table 4, page 89, so the figures reported here differ from those presented in that record (out of a total of 12.2 hours spend in this category only 3.94 hours involved contact with others).

cent). The percentages for the individual superintendents show that Superintendents A, B, G, and H had approximately 50 per cent of all their verbal contacts on the telephone, while only Superintendent D, with 72 per cent, had over 50 per cent of his verbal contacts in the form of unscheduled meetings. Superintendent D also made very few of his verbal contacts over the phone (only 12.5 per cent). The composite figures show that 9.5 per cent of all the superintendents' verbal contacts were made through scheduled meetings and only 3 per cent by tours and visits.

The proportions of time spent on the various contact media, however, show quite a different pattern. The composite percentages indicate that the superintendents spent 44 per cent of their total verbal contact time in scheduled meetings, 36 per cent in unscheduled meetings, 16 per cent on the telephone, and 4 per cent on tours and visits. The individual statistics (except for Superintendent A who spent a greater proportion of his time on the telephone than he did in scheduled meetings) show a similar pattern with regard to the size of the proportions of time spent on the four verbal contact media.

Participants in the Verbal Contacts of the Superintendent

Figure 22 presents the figures for the proportion of the total number of verbal contacts in which the superintendent was involved with each of the categories of people identified.

The percentages presented in the remaining sections of Chapter 5 are the composite scores for all eight superintendents. These composite percentages are used to describe the characteristics of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

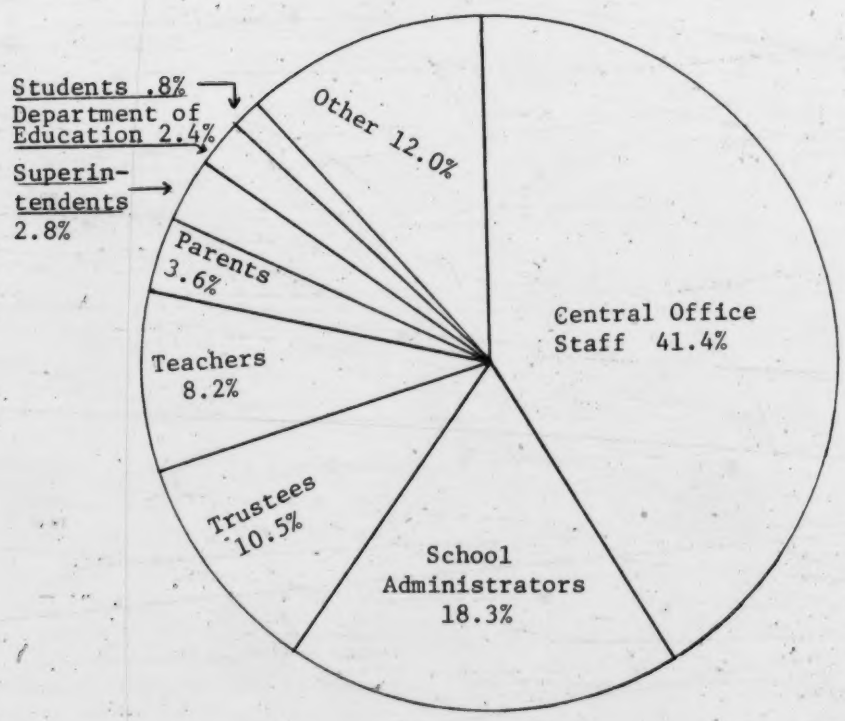

Figure 22

The Percentage of the Total Number of Verbal Contacts in Which the Superintendent was Involved with Various Categories of Individuals

The percentages given in Figure 22 show that the greatest proportion of the superintendent's contacts were with central office staff (41.4 per cent). The next highest proportion, 18.3 per cent, were with school-based administrators. Ten-and-one-half per cent of the verbal contacts were with school board members, 8.2 per cent with teachers, 3.6 per cent with parents, 2.8 per cent with other superintendents, 2.4 per cent with Department of Education personnel, and less than 1 per cent with students. Approximately 12 per cent of the superintendent's

contacts were with a variety of different individuals (categorized under "other"), such as salesmen, architects, service-club representatives, visiting dignitaries, etc.

The proportions of verbal contact time spent by the superintendent with the various categories of individuals are presented in Figure 23.

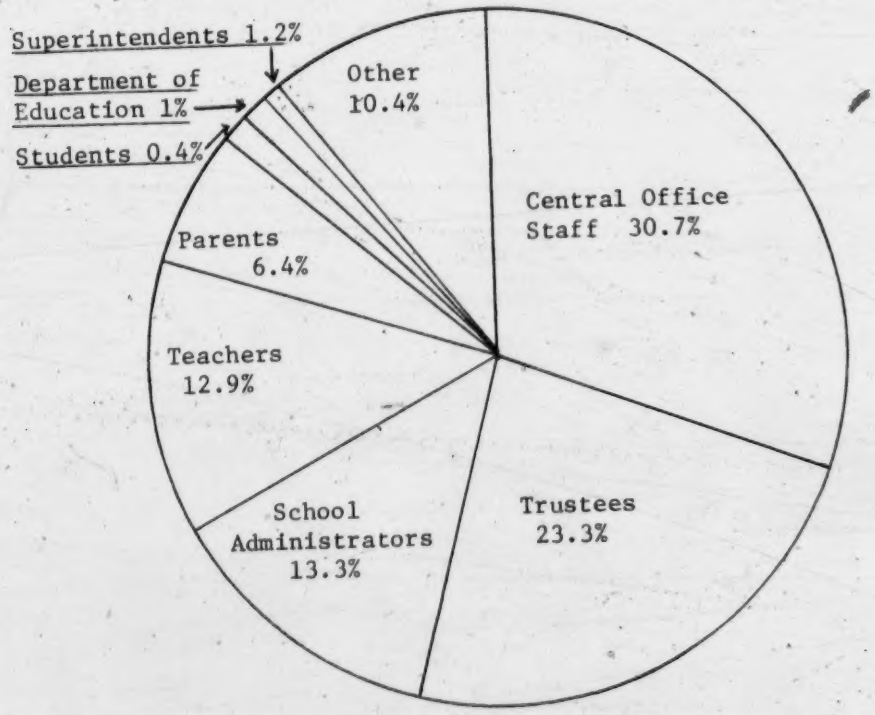

Figure 23

Proportions of Total Verbal Contact Time Spent by the Superintendent with Various Categories of Individuals

The superintendent spent the greatest proportion of his verbal contact time, 30.7 per cent, with the various members of his central office staff. He spent 23.3 per cent of his verbal contact time with school board members, 13.3 per cent with school-based administrators, 12.9 per cent with teachers, and 6.4 per cent with parents. He spent

a smaller proportion of his verbal contact time (.4 per cent) with students than with any other category of individuals. Approximately 10 per cent of his contact time was spent with a variety of different individuals categorized under the heading "other."

Initiation of Verbal Contacts

Figures 24 and 25 give an indication of the degree of control the superintendent had over the time he spent in verbal contact. Figure 24 shows the proportion of the total number of verbal contacts initiated by the superintendent and Figure 25 indicates the proportion of the time spent in these contacts that was controlled by the superintendent.

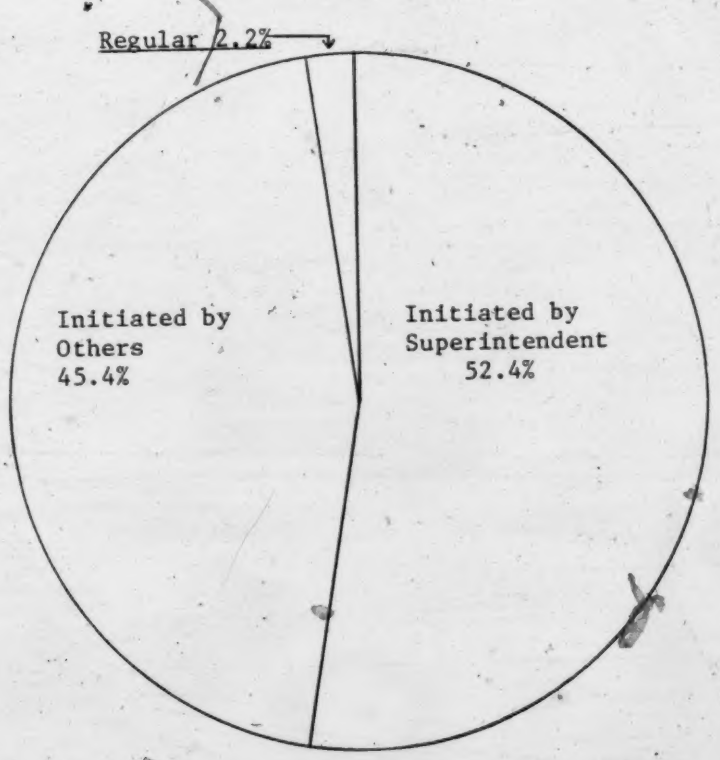

Figure 24

Proportion of Total Verbal Contact (1) Initiated by the Superintendent; (2) Initiated by Others; and (3) Conducted on a Regular Basis

The percentages in Figure 24 show that 52.4 per cent of all the verbal contacts engaged in by the superintendent were initiated by himself, while 45.4 per cent of such contacts were initiated by others, and just over 2 per cent of these contacts were conducted on a regular basis.

Figure 25 presents data that indicate the degree to which the superintendent had control over the time he spent in verbal contact with others.

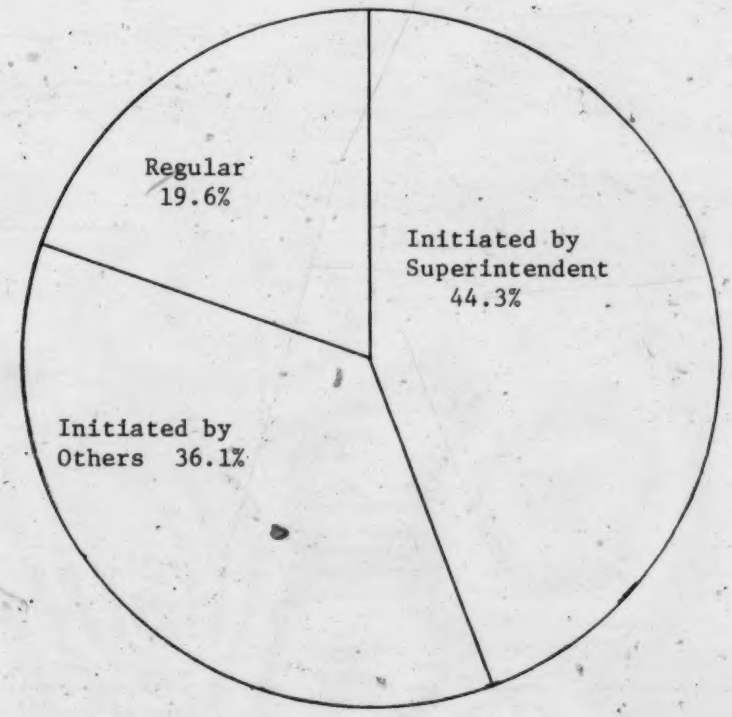

Figure 25

Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time: (1) Initiated by the Superintendent; (2) Initiated by Others; and (3) Taken Up by Regularly Scheduled Meetings

The percentages show that the superintendent initiated 44.3 per cent of the total time spent in verbal contact. Just over 36 per cent of his verbal contact time was initiated by others, and 19.6 per cent of the time in such contacts occurred on a regularly scheduled basis.

Location of Verbal Contacts

Table 16 shows where the verbal contacts took place and the time spent by the superintendent interacting in the various locations identified.

Table 16

Location of Verbal Contacts and Proportion of Verbal Contact Time Spent by the Superintendent in Each Location

Location	Per cent of Total Contacts	Per cent of Contact Time
Superintendent's Office	70.4	42.0
NIO[1]	19.2	40.2
School	9.6	15.2
Away From His System[2]	0.8	2.6

[1]Not in his office but in the central office building.

[2]These contacts did not include the conferences attended by Superintendents C and H but took the form of such contacts as a Municipal Library Board meeting and a visit to the principal of a school outside his jurisdiction.

By far the greatest proportion of the verbal contacts in which the superintendent was involved took place in his own office (70.4 per cent). In addition, 19.2 per cent of his verbal interactions took place elsewhere in the central office building, indicating that almost 90 per cent of all the superintendent's contacts occurred at, or near, his place of work. Only 9.6 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts took place in schools and less than 1 per cent of them occurred outside the school system.

The superintendent spent 42 per cent of his verbal contact time in his own office and 40.2 per cent in other parts of the central office building. He, therefore, spent over 80 per cent of his verbal contact time at, or near, his office. He spent 15.2 per cent of his verbal contact time in schools and 2.6 per cent of it involved with individuals outside his system. Eighty-five per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts were with one person while 15 per cent of these contacts occurred with two or more persons present.

The Purposes for the Verbal Contacts: Using Mintzberg's (1973:251) Categories

Table 17 presents information on the purpose for which the various verbal contacts were initiated. The data is organized using the "categories of purpose" developed by Mintzberg (1973) in his study of five chief executives in the United States. While the initiator of some contacts had more than one purpose in mind, or was covert in his intentions, the researcher has used the primary issue in the contact in determining the raison d'être for the interaction. At times it was difficult to discern what the core issue really was and on such occasions the researcher checked his interpretation of the event with the superintendent at the first available opportunity.

The percentages in column one of Table 17 give details on the proportion of the total number of verbal contacts devoted to each of the purposes identified. The figures indicate that over 37 per cent of all verbal contacts were for the purpose of making requests. The figures in column two indicate that this involvement by the superintendent in making and receiving requests took up over 15 per cent of his verbal

Table 17

Percentage of Total Verbal Contacts and Percentage of Total Contact Time Devoted to the Categories of "Purpose of Contact" Identified by Mintzberg (1973:25)

Purpose of the Contact	Percentage of Total Contacts	Percentage of Contact Time
Scheduling Meetings and Events	8.6	3.3
Ceremonial Activities*	1.5	4.7
Public Relations Activities*	2.7	2.9
Developing Strategy (primarily to solve problems)	10.0	29.7
Negotiation Activities*	0.7	4.7
Requests from Others	18.7	7.5
Superintendent Requests to Others	18.5	7.6
Receiving Information from Others	11.0	5.6
Giving Information to Others	9.0	5.8
Observational Activities (primarily for evaluation)	3.0	5.9
Review Sessions/Progress Reports	16.3	22.3

*The ceremonial, public relations, and negotiation categories reflect direct involvement by the superintendent in that activity. Many related activities are subsumed under other categories, such as, developing strategy, and giving and receiving information.

contact time. A more detailed description of the form of these requests is presented in Table 18.

Table 18

An Analysis of the Type of Requests Made To, and By, the Superintendent

Direction of Request	Request for Information	Request for Advice	Request for Authorization	Request to Undertake Task
From Superintendent				
- Per cent of Total Requests	69.6	23.8	2.9	3.7
- Per cent of Request Time	65.6	24.1	1.8	8.5
To Superintendent				
-Per cent of Total Requests	51.7	26.2	22.1	-
-Per cent of Request Time	47.7	28.4	23.9	-

The percentages in Table 18 show that almost 70 per cent of the requests made by the superintendent were for the purpose of obtaining information on various matters. Requests by the superintendent for advice represented 23.8 per cent of all his requests, while requests for authorization and requests to others to undertake a task followed with 2.9 per cent and 3.7 per cent, respectively. The time spent by the superintendent on each form of request showed a similar pattern, with the greatest proportion of his request time devoted to seeking information (65.6 per cent), followed by requests for advice with 24.1 per cent,

request for authorization with 1.8 per cent, and requests to undertake a task with 8.5 per cent.

The data on requests made to the superintendent show the importance of the superintendent as a source of information for others. Over 50 per cent of all the requests made by others were for information and this represented 47.7 per cent of the total time involved for requests by others. Of the requests made to the superintendent 26.2 per cent were for advice, representing 28.4 per cent of request time, and 22.1 per cent were for permission or authorization, accounting for 23.9 per cent of total request time.

As was indicated by the figures presented in Table 18, the superintendent often made requests to others for information and was often asked by others for information. However, a further examination of the percentages presented in Table 17 shows clearly that the informational role of the superintendent was a substantial one. Twenty per cent of his total verbal contacts and 11.4 per cent of his total verbal contact time was devoted to directly giving and receiving information. The observational activities and the review sessions (together accounting for 19.3 per cent of his total verbal contacts and 28.2 per cent of his verbal contact time) were primarily used by the superintendent to accumulate information. The four purpose categories related to information, when aggregated, account for 39.3 per cent of all the superintendent's verbal contacts and 39.6 per cent of his total verbal contact time. A detailed breakdown of the data for the four purpose categories: (1) receiving information; (2) giving information; (3) observational activities; and (4) review sessions is presented in Table 19.

Table 19

An Analysis of the Four Major Categories of Activities Related to the Informational Role of the Superintendent: (1) Giving Information; (2) Receiving Information; (3) Observation; and (4) Review

Categories by Purpose of Contact	Per cent of Total Category Activities	Per cent of Total Category Time
GIVING INFORMATION		
General Information	58.6	54.0
Advice	10.0	19.4
Instructions	15.7	16.7
Notification of Problems	15.7	9.9
RECEIVING INFORMATION		
General Information	55.8	38.3
Advice	5.8	11.8
Notification of Problems	38.4	49.9
OBSERVATIONAL ACTIVITIES		
For Information	60.9	60.1
For Evaluation	39.1	39.9
REVIEW ACTIVITIES		
General Discussion	27.5	25.3
Programs	25.2	34.8
System Operations	20.5	18.0
Policy	1.7	1.2
Problems	20.4	18.5
Post-Meeting	4.7	2.2

The data presented in Table 19 show that the majority of the superintendent's verbal contacts devoted to the giving out of information were concerned with general purpose information (58.6 per cent). The disseminating of this general-type information, primarily to central office staff and to schools, accounted for 54 per cent of the total time devoted to this category of activity. Ten per cent of the contacts made by the superintendent for the purpose of giving information were utilized as occasions for offering advice, and this represented 19.4 per cent of the time spent on "giving information" activities. Approximately 16 per cent of the "giving information" contacts were used for notifying others of problems and for giving instructions, and this accounted for 9.9 per cent and 16.7 per cent, respectively, of the time devoted to the "giving information" group of activities.

Table 19 also shows that receiving general information and being notified of problems accounted for over 94 per cent of the verbal contacts and in excess of 88 per cent of the time spent by the superintendent on "receiving information" activities. The superintendent's observational activities were also primarily orientated to the seeking of information of a general nature--60.9 per cent of his observational activities and 60.1 per cent of his observational time. The remainder of his observational activities and time were devoted to the direct observation of teachers at work in the classroom, for the purpose of their evaluation.

Review sessions (which usually took the form of unscheduled meetings) often took place between the superintendent and his assistant(s) and they were usually of a general nature. The greatest

proportion of this review time (34.8 per cent) was devoted to general program reviews and the next highest proportion of time (25.3 per cent) was spent on broad general discussions covering a multitude of topics--a type of general system's progress report. The superintendent was involved for approximately one-fifth of his review activities and time in getting and giving progress reports on problem developments. Eighteen per cent of review time and 20.5 per cent of review activities were devoted to discussions on general and specific aspects of the system's operation. Post-meeting and policy reviews accounted for a small proportion of his review activities (4.7 per cent and 1.7 per cent, respectively) and of his review time (2.2 per cent and 1.2 per cent, respectively).

Table 17, page 126, shows that the superintendent was involved in a number of other verbal contacts that have been categorized according to their primary purpose as: (1) scheduling meetings and events; (2) ceremonial activities; (3) public relations activities; (4) developing strategy; and (5) negotiation activities. The data in Table 17 indicate that 8.6 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts and 3.3 per cent of this contact time were devoted to the scheduling of meetings and events. Approximately 24 per cent of his scheduling activities and scheduling time were spent on the preparation of professional events, such as, inservice events for teachers. Just over 13 per cent of his scheduling activities and 20 per cent of his scheduling time were devoted to the organization of his work days in terms of scheduling his own office activities. The remainder of his scheduling activities and time were spent on setting up general meetings and events.

The superintendent participated in a number of activities that were ceremonial in nature. The fact that the superintendent is the "head" of the educational system at the local level makes him a status figure in his community and results in his being invited to such social and ceremonial activities as service club socials, school social functions, and award's nights and graduation functions. This category of activity accounted for 1.5 per cent of his total verbal contacts and 4.7 per cent of his contact time. However, if we add to this other activities indirectly related to this ceremonial function, such as, discussing such events at meetings or making and receiving telephone calls regarding arrangements for such events, his involvement represents 4.2 per cent of his total contacts and 5.7 per cent of his contact time.

The superintendent was also very conscious of his public relations image as a representative of his school board and educational system. The figures in Table 17 indicate that 2.7 per cent of his verbal contacts and 2.9 per cent of his contact time were devoted to public relations endeavors, such as, discussing board policy with media representatives and making television appearances to explain new school programs. Approximately 85 per cent of these public relations contacts were with parents or taxpayers of the system and 15 per cent were with teachers and students, representing 88 per cent and 12 per cent, respectively, of his total time devoted to public relations activities.

However, it was sometimes difficult to determine when the superintendent was acting in a public relations fashion. While he was engaged in other aspects of his work he often conducted himself in a manner that contributed to the development of good public relations. In some ways the superintendent was conscious of the fact that good public

relations was an inherent part of "doing a good job" and it was not merely a matter of "turning on" this specific function periodically.

Table 17 also shows that approximately 30 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contact time and 10 per cent of his contact activities were spent in developing planning and problem-solving strategies. Of the total time devoted to this category of activity approximately 90 per cent was spent in planning strategy for system operations and school programming. The remaining time was devoted to the development of strategies to resolve personnel conflicts and solve problems.

A number of verbal contacts were initiated for the specific purpose of negotiating wage settlements and conditions of employment with teachers and other employees. These interactions accounted for less than 1 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts, but they occupied almost 5 per cent of his contact time. On occasion, he was involved in verbal contacts that were indirectly related to negotiations, for example, telephone conversations with other superintendents to learn of the progress of negotiations elsewhere, or discussions with the Alberta School Trustees Association's lawyer regarding the wording of contract clauses. Altogether, his direct and indirect negotiation contacts accounted for 2.7 per cent of his total verbal contacts and 7.7 per cent of his contact time.

The Purposes for the Verbal Contacts: Another Perspective

The use of the categories for the "purposes of the contacts" developed by Mintzberg restricted the researcher in drawing forth from the data the full richness of their meaning. At least four other

influences helped in achieving a greater development of the data so that additional themes emerged from them. These influences, or sources for the germination of additional categories of purposes, can be identified as: (1) the use of theoretical notes by the researcher as explained in the methodology section; (2) the difficulty of determining the primary purpose of some verbal contacts which led to the notation of secondary purposes by the researcher; (3) the issues raised and comments made by the superintendents themselves in interviews; and (4) the categories emanating from the literature especially the "propositions about managerial roles" proposed by Mintzberg (1973:92). In the discussion that follows three aspects of the superintendent's administrative behavior are examined--his decision-making behavior, his problem-solving behavior, and his executive and educational leadership behavior.

In developing the theoretical notes it became apparent to the researcher, early in the period of observation, that the superintendent was not required to make definite decisions in many of the verbal contacts in which he was involved. This observation seemed to be at odds with a segment of the literature in administrative and management theory, both within and out of education, which places great emphasis on the decision-making functions of an administrator's work (e.g., Litchfield, 1956; March and Simon, 1958; Simon, 1961; Campbell et al., 1966; Owens, 1970). A careful study of the content of each verbal contact revealed that out of a total of 777 verbal contacts the superintendent was not required to make any decision in 409, or 52.6 per cent of them. In the remaining 368, or 47.4 per cent of these verbal contacts, some type of decision action was required of the superintendent. The details of how

the superintendent responded in these situations, requiring some form of decision, are presented in Table 20.

Table 20

An Analysis of How the Superintendent Responded to Situations Requiring Some Form of Decision Action

Action Taken	Number per Category	Percentage of Total Required
Decisions Made	172	46.8
Decision Strategy Established	155	42.1
Decision Postponed	41	11.1
Total	368	100

Table 20 shows that decisions were actually made on 46.8 per cent of those occasions requiring a decision. A more detailed analysis of the decisions made revealed that 52.9 per cent of them could be classified as "programmed decisions" (Simon, 1961). Decisions were classified as programmed when a definite procedure for making them was apparent, such as, the use of school board policy and regulations, or when they were based on precedent--"how it was done last year." Just over 47 per cent of the decisions made by the superintendent were classified as "nonprogrammed decisions" (Simon, 1961), or decisions for which there existed no clear method for handling them. In these instances the superintendent found himself in a "de novo" situation and had to fall back on his expertise and creative ability.

Frequently the superintendent established the mechanisms by which the decision would ultimately be made. This method of developing a strategy to reach a decision, which occurred on 42.1 per cent of the occasions requiring decision action, took a number of forms. On one occasion a committee was formed to study and make recommendations on a problem of students leaving the school and causing a nuisance in the community during the lunch break. Other examples of the superintendent adopting a strategy to reach a decision included: (1) referring a busing problem to the policy committee; (2) delegating the responsibility to a principal to decide on a parent's request to transfer her daughter; (3) setting up a meeting with a principal and teachers to determine the fate of a student who was a discipline problem; and (4) setting up a series of meetings between two parents who were in conflict (as a result of their children's actions) and the principal of the school involved, and later between the parents and the Assistant Superintendent.

On a number of occasions (11.1 per cent of all those requiring decision action) the superintendent found himself in the position of having insufficient information to make a decision, or even with the required information unwilling to "play his hand." In these circumstances he often postponed the making of a decision indefinitely (his usual response on such occasions was, "Give me time to have a closer look at this and I'll get back to you later").

In the first days of the observation study, one feature of the superintendent's work noted by the researcher was the great number of problems which surfaced before him each day. In fact, 14.7 per cent

of all the superintendent's verbal contacts were concerned with problems and they occupied 11.7 per cent of his verbal contact time. Table 21 provides more detail on the types of problems faced by the superintendent and the percentage of time he devoted to each.

Table 21

Types of Problems Faced by the Superintendent and the Percentage of His Problem Time Devoted to Each Type

Problem Area	Per cent of Total Problems	Per cent of Total Problem Time
Personnel	76.3	83.8
Programs	2.6	1.7
Operations	21.1	14.5

The data in Table 21 show that 76.3 per cent of the superintendent's problems and 83.8 per cent of the time he spent on problems were taken up by personnel problems. These personnel problems consisted almost exclusively of conflicts occurring among various employees of the system. Examples of such conflicts included: (1) a complaint from a teacher about the private life of another teacher; (2) a grievance by clerical workers over the way they were treated by the secretary-treasurer; (3) a threatened resignation by an accounts clerk because of a personality conflict with the secretary-treasurer; (4) a complaint from a parent about a teacher's use of questionable language in the classroom; and (5) a verbal clash between the superintendent and the principal over the latter's reluctance to follow central office budget-accounting procedures. The "conflict" problems

accounted for 8.3 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts and 8.1 per cent of his verbal contact time. Table 21 also indicates that 21.1 per cent of the problems facing the superintendent were concerned with the general operation of the system, for example, replacing broken glass, visiting a school to examine faulty washrooms, or deciding on the installation of a new heating unit. This category of problems accounted for 14.5 per cent of his total time devoted to problems.

Many of the requests made to the superintendent were for the purpose of getting permission to get more money, or having a piece of equipment or a number of instructional supplies purchased by the central office. An analysis of the data determined that 7.6 per cent of the superintendent's total verbal contacts and 4 per cent of this contact time were devoted to this "resource allocator" function.

A dilemma confronting the superintendent, which has received considerable attention in the literature, is the question as to whether he is to be, principally, the board's man acting in an executive capacity or, primarily, the educational leader, and a major representative of the teaching profession (Dykes, 1965; Ashby, 1968; Gathercole, 1970; and Downey, 1976). Downey (1976:27) identified this problem as "one of the dominant dilemmas currently pervading the educational enterprise in Alberta."

In response to this concern the researcher analyzed the content of the superintendent's verbal contacts to try to determine the proportion of his verbal contacts, and the proportion of his verbal contact time, devoted to the boards "executive" work versus his "educational" work. The literature reviewed in this study, especially the literature

related to the tasks of the superintendent, and the data themselves were used as guidelines in deciding on which activities were to be classified as educational and executive. The group of educational activities included those verbal contacts that dealt with: (1) the development, review, and evaluation of educational programs in the schools; (2) the professional development of staff members, for example, inservice sessions for teachers; and (3) the dissemination of professional information and advice, for example, advice from the superintendent to a teacher on a student learning problem.

The group of activities classified as executive included those verbal contacts that dealt with: (1) the maintenance of the system, for example, the repair and replacement of faulty facilities and equipment; (2) planning for the system, for example, choosing a new school site or developing projections of future student populations; (3) the selection, placement and evaluation of system personnel; (4) the allocation of resources, for example, the granting of funds for instructional supplies and equipment or for busing services; (5) the resolution of conflict among personnel; (6) the performance of ceremonial functions as a representative of the school board; (7) the performance of public relations activities; and (8) the negotiation of wage agreements and working conditions with employees. While it could be argued that numbers three to seven, inclusive, are just as much part of the superintendent's

educational functions, it is proposed here that these functions are common to the administration of many types of organizations and are, therefore, more management-type activities.

A close scrutiny of the content of all the superintendent's verbal contacts determined that 97.7 per cent of all these contacts and 96.8 per cent of his time devoted to them could be designated as being either executive or educational in nature. The remaining contacts and time did not "fit" into these categories and were excluded from the calculations.

The data for the number and percentage of verbal contacts, and the total time and percentage of verbal contact time spent by the eight Alberta superintendents over 30 days of observation classified according to executive and educational activities, are presented in Table 22.

The data in Table 22 show that the eight superintendents were involved in 759 verbal contacts that could be classified as executive or educational. These contacts took up 163.9 hours of the 169.35 hours devoted to verbal contacts. Approximately 72 per cent of these verbal contacts (a total of 562) and 69.6 per cent of this verbal contact time (a total of 117.85 hours) were spent on executive activities, while the respective figures for educational activities were 25.4 per cent (a total of 197) and 27.2 per cent (a total of 46.05 hours).

Table 22

The Executive and Educational Activities of Eight Alberta Superintendents as Determined from the Content of Their Verbal Contacts

	Executive	Educational	Total*
Total Number of Verbal Contacts	562	197	759
Total Verbal Contact Time (hours)	117.85	46.05	163.9
Percentage of Total Verbal Contacts	72.30	25.40	97.7
Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time	69.60	27.20	96.8

*The total number of verbal contacts for the eight superintendents over the 30 days of observation was 777 and the total time devoted to these contacts was 169.35 hours. The differences in totals, 18 contacts and 5.45 hours, consisted of verbal contacts whose primary purposes were so general that they did not "fit" into either category of functions and were excluded from the calculations.

A more detailed breakdown of the percentages of the superintendent's time devoted to these same categories of activities is presented in Table 23.

The data in Table 23 show that most of the superintendent's educational activities (63.6 per cent) and the time he devoted to these activities (78.8 per cent), were spent on the development, review and evaluation of educational programs in the schools. Twenty-three per cent of his educational activities and 12.2 per cent of his time devoted to these activities were spent on professional development and inservice activities.

Table 23

An Analysis of the Executive and Educational Functions of the Superintendent: The Number of, and the Percentage of Time Spent on, Various Subcategories of Each

Functions	Per cent of Total Category's Activities	Per cent of Total Category's Time
Educational		
Program development review and evaluation	63.6	78.8
Professional development/ inservice facilitation	23.0	12.2
Professional information and advice to subordinates	13.4	9.0
Executive		
Maintenance of system's operation	28.6	18.2
Planning for system's operation	22.0	28.4
Personnel selection placement and evaluation	14.0	12.5
Resolution of personnel conflict	11.6	11.5
Allocation of resources	10.5	5.8
Performing ceremonial activities	5.9	8.3
Performing public relations activities	3.7	4.1
Performing negotiating activities	3.7	11.2

An examination of the percentages for executive activities in Table 23 reveals that the superintendent devoted over 50 per cent of his verbal contacts to activities related to maintaining and planning for the system. Approximately 47 per cent of his executive time was spent on these same activities. The selection, placement and evaluation of personnel accounted for 14 per cent of his verbal contacts and 12.5 per cent of his verbal contact time. Resolving personnel conflict accounted for 11.6 per cent of his executive activities and 11.5 per cent of his time devoted to these activities. The allocation of resources accounted for 10.5 per cent of his executive activities and 5.8 per cent of his time devoted to these activities. Performing ceremonial activities, public relations activities, and negotiation activities, together, accounted for just over 13 per cent of his executive activities, but took up almost 24 per cent of his time spent on this category of activitity.

THE MAIL RECORD OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

An Overview

Table 24 contains the results of an analysis of the number of mail items originated, and received, by the superintendent.

The eight superintendents over the period of observation dealt with 747 items of mail. Incoming mail items accounted for 540, or 72.3 per cent of the total mail, and outgoing mail items numbered 207, or 27.7 per cent of all the mail. The average number of pieces

of incoming mail amounted to 18 per day and the respective figures for outgoing mail was seven.

Table 24

The Superintendents' Incoming and Outgoing Mail: An Analysis

Number and Direction of Mail Items	Number of Mail Items	Percentage of Total Mail
Total Number of Mail Items	747	
Incoming Mail	540	72.3
Outgoing Mail	207	27.7
Average Number of Incoming Mail per Day	18	
Average Number of Outgoing Mail per Day	7	

A more detailed analysis of the nature of the superintendent's incoming and outgoing mail, as calculated from the composite scores for all eight superintendents, is presented in the following pages.

The Nature of the Superintendent's Incoming Mail

The incoming mail was analyzed according to form, sender, attention received, and purpose. Table 25 provides details on the form of the superintendent's incoming mail.

The superintendent received 28.4 per cent of his incoming mail in the form of letters. Reports accounted for 18.8 per cent of the incoming pieces and this was followed by forms with 14.4 per cent, memos and guidebooks with 6.8 per cent each, and newsletters with 6.3 per cent. The remaining categories accounted for just under 20 per cent of the incoming pieces of mail.

Table 25

An Analysis of the Form of the Superintendent's Incoming Mail

Form Category	Per cent of Total Incoming Mail	Form	Per cent of Total Incoming Mail
Letter	28.4	Pamphlet/Brochure	5.5
Report	18.8	Agendas/Schedules	3.9
Form	14.4	Newspapers	3.0
Memo	6.8	Magazines/Periodicals	2.8
Guidebook	6.8	Catalogues	1.8
Newsletter	6.3	Contracts	1.5

Table 26 contains the results of the analysis of the origin of the superintendent's incoming mail. The figures in the table show that 23 per cent of this incoming mail originated from members of his central office staff. The next highest source was school-based administrators who originated 13.6 per cent of his incoming pieces of mail, and the Department of Education followed closely with 13.2 per cent. Teachers sent the superintendent 9.3 per cent of his mail, while almost 8 per cent came from publishing and manufacturing companies and slightly more than 5 per cent came from professional and educational associations and societies. Approximately one-quarter of his incoming mail originated from a wide variety of sources, some of which are identified in Table 26. In addition, over 50 per cent of the superintendent's mail originated from outside his school system.

Table 26

The Percentage of Incoming Mail Originating from Various Sources

Source of Incoming Mail	Percentage of Total Incoming Mail	Source of Incoming Mail	Percentage of Total Incoming Mail
Central Office Staff	23.0	Alberta Trustees' Association	3.3
School Administrators	13.6	Other Superintendents	2.2
Department of Education	13.2	Alberta Teachers' Association	2.0
Teachers	9.3	Parents	1.8
Manufacturing/ Publishing Co.	7.6	Trustees	1.5
Educational Societies	5.2	Superintendents' Association	.5
University	4.6	Miscellaneous	12.2

The pieces of incoming mail received various levels of attention from the superintendent. This attention has been classified as: (1) sent directly to others (2 per cent); (2) read (51.5 per cent); (3) studied (4.1 per cent); and (4) skimmed (42.4 per cent). After this initial treatment the superintendent directed the mail he examined to various destinations. Figure 26 provides details on the action taken by the superintendent with the mail he handled.

The percentages in Figure 26 show that over 50 per cent of the incoming mail was consigned, on the day it was received, to the general files. Twenty-three per cent of the incoming mail was forwarded to various members of his central office staff, and 14.5 per cent was put into his workfile to be dealt with at another time. Almost 7 per cent of the incoming mail was distributed to the

various schools in the system, and 1.8 per cent was sent to trustees and others. Less than 3 per cent of the incoming mail was put into the wastebasket.

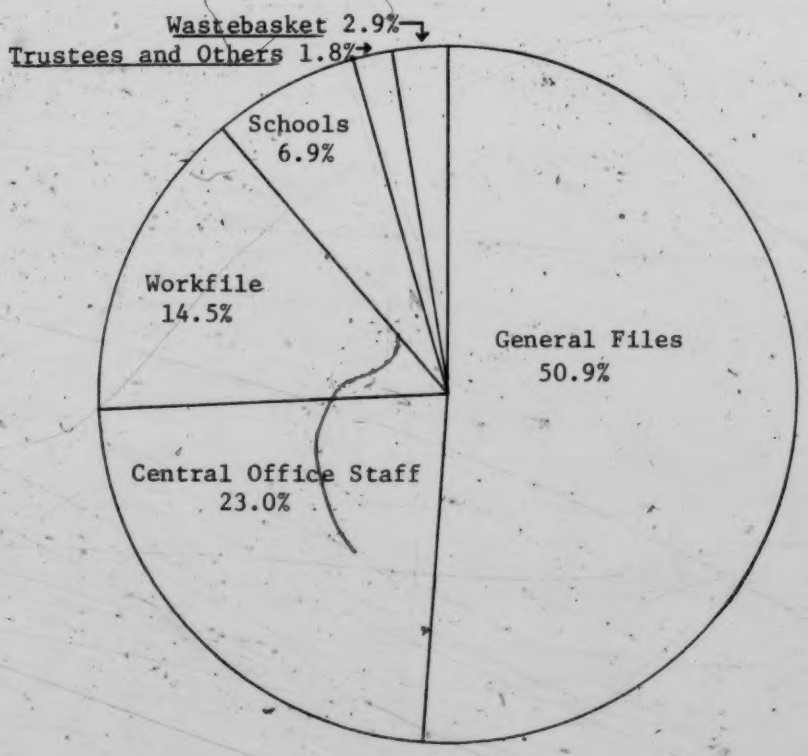

Figure 26

The Percentages of Incoming Mail by Destination

The incoming mail items varied considerably in the nature of their contents, however, each of them could be classified according to whether it provided information or made a request. Table 27 contains the results of the analysis of the contents of the incoming mail using the categories just mentioned.

Table 27

The Percentages of Incoming Mail that (1) Made Requests, or (2) Gave Information to the Superintendent

Making Requests	Per cent of Total Incoming Mail	Providing Information	Per cent of Total Incoming Mail
Seeking Permission	14.6	General Information	18.9
Solicitations	6.8	Information on Educational Programs and Activities	15.2
Information/Advice	3.0		
Status Requests[1]	1.7	Notification of Meetings/Events	12.3
		General Reports	11.8
		Information on System's Operations	10.0
		Acknowledgements[2]	3.9
		Notification of Problem	1.8
Total Requests	26.1	Total Information	73.9

[1]These consisted primarily of invitations to speak at a function or attend a social gathering.

[2]These consisted primarily of a "thank you" for assistance or advice given, or a function attended.

The data in Table 27 show that 26.1 per cent of all the pieces of incoming mail made some type of request to the superintendent. The greatest proportion of these requests (14.6 per cent) came from subordinates who wanted the superintendent's permission for a variety of things, for example, permission to attend conferences, permission to be absent with or without pay, or permission to spend more money. The next highest proportion of requests (6.8 per cent) were in the form of solicitations, particularly from publishing and manufacturing companies

who wanted the superintendent to purchase their supplies and equipment. A number of requests for information and advice reached the superintendent through the mail (3 per cent of incoming mail), but, generally, the phone was the medium of communication most commonly used for this type of activity. The status requests to the superintendent, which consisted primarily of invitations to speak to, or appear at, a function accounted for 1.7 per cent of the incoming mail.

Approximately 74 per cent of the incoming mail provided the superintendent with some form of information. A number of pamphlets, brochures, and reports of a general informational nature, represented 18.9 per cent of incoming mail. Through reports, periodicals, magazines, memos and letters the superintendent was kept informed of a variety of educational events and program developments. This type of information accounted for 15.2 per cent of the incoming mail. The remainder of the incoming mail consisted of notification of meetings/events with 12.3 per cent, general reports with 11.8 per cent, information on the operation of the system with 10 per cent, acknowledgement of assistance or advice given with 3.9 per cent, and notification of problems with 1.8 per cent. The superintendent almost always received his first notification of a problem over the phone or in a face-to-face meeting so these notifications through the mail were mainly for the purpose of documentation.

The Nature of the Superintendent's Outgoing Mail

The outgoing mail, all of which was originated by the superintendent, was categorized according to form, destination, and purpose.

Figure 27 provides details on the form of the superintendent's outgoing mail. The figures indicate that 42 per cent of the mail initiated by the superintendent consisted of letters, while 32.4 per cent were in the form of memos. He wrote many reports (14.5 per cent of the outgoing mail) which covered a great variety of topics and he also had to initiate or fill out a large number of forms (6.3 per cent of his outgoing mail). The remainder of his outgoing mail consisted of agendas for various meetings (3.8 per cent of outgoing mail) and other miscellaneous forms of written communication (1 per cent of outgoing mail).

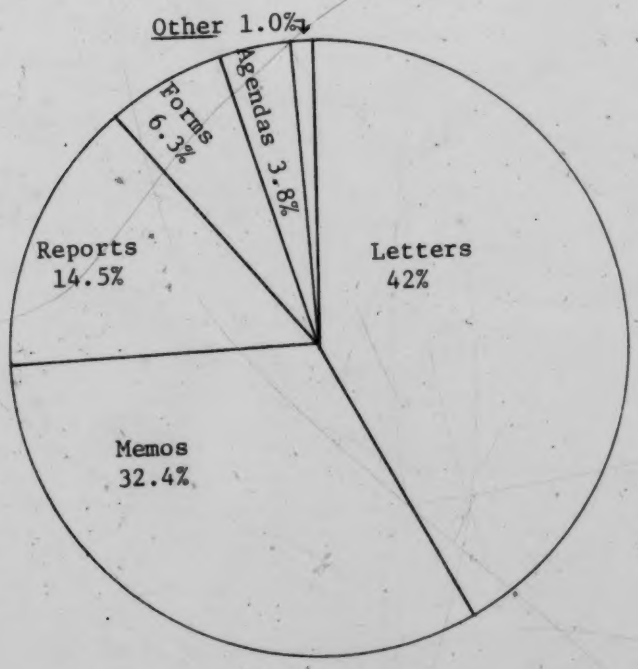

Figure 27

An Analysis of the Form of the Superintendent's Outgoing Mail

The superintendent directed his mail to a variety of individuals and groups and the percentages of his outgoing mail going to the various destinations are presented in Figure 28. Almost one-quarter (24.2 per cent) of the mail he initiated went to various members of his central office staff and 14.5 per cent went to the administrators in the schools. Teachers received 12.5 per cent of the superintendent's mail, trustees received 4.8 per cent, parents received 2.4 per cent, the Department of Education, the Alberta Teachers' Association, and the Alberta School Trustees' Association received 2 per cent. The remainder (approximately 40 per cent) of his mail went to a wide variety of individuals and institutions outside his school system, such as, lawyers, architects, university professors, and publishing and manufacturing companies.

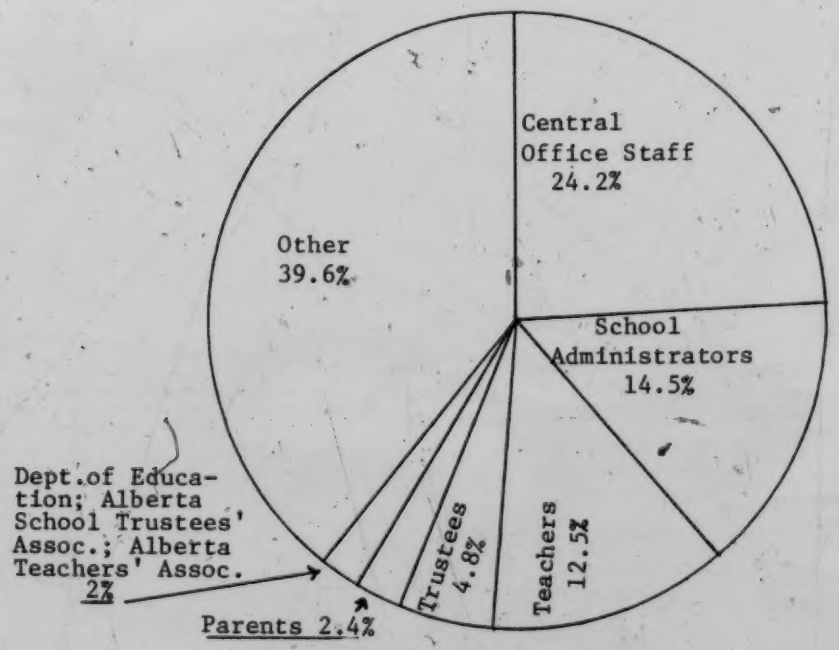

Figure 28

The Percentage of the Superintendent's Outgoing Mail Going to Various Destinations

The superintendent's outgoing mail was initiated for a wide variety of purposes. Table 28 contains the results of the analysis of the purposes for which all the pieces of outgoing mail were originated. The data show that the superintendent initiated 25.6 per cent of his mail for the purpose of making reports. These reports were usually directed to school personnel and trustees and they often contained progress reports on various operations and programs and/or suggestions and recommendations for system improvements. Fourteen per cent of the mail items initiated by the superintendent were for the purpose of recording important information and events for future reference, for example, the important developments in a personnel conflict situation. The superintendent used the mail to give directions and instructions to his employees and also to grant permission to subordinates in response to various requests (11.6 per cent of outgoing mail in each category). He also used the mail to disseminate information to his subordinates and he sent many "thank you" and "congratulations" letters in appreciation for work done or excellence achieved (10.7 per cent of outgoing mail in each category). He initiated 7.2 per cent of his mail for the purpose of requesting information and advice from various individuals and he used written communications to ask subordinates to initiate action or undertake a task (6.8 per cent of outgoing mail). He also used the written word to refuse employees of the system certain requests they had made, for example, permission to have leave with pay (1.8 per cent of outgoing mail). Many of the mail items initiated by the superintendent, for the purpose of granting or refusing subordinate requests, were often written for the record as the granting or refusing decisions had already

been communicated by telephone. Consequently, these written communications often served the same purpose as those classified as "Recording Important Information."

Table 28

An Analysis of the Purpose of the Superintendent's Outgoing Mail

Purpose	Per cent of Total Outgoing Mail	Purpose	Per cent of Total Outgoing Mail
General Reports	25.6	Acknowledgements[1]	10.7
Record Important Information	14.0	Request for Information/Advice	7.2
Giving Instructions/ Directions	11.6	Request to Undertake Task	6.8
Granting Permission	11.6	Refusing Permission	1.8
Information to Subordinates	10.7		

[1]These consisted primarily of appreciations for work done or congratulations on awards won and/or recognition received.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED DATA FOR COUNTY AND DISTRICT/DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS

The Superintendent in the County System

Downey (1976:14) pointed out that ". . . the county system creates confusion over the role and position of the superintendent of schools." Downey (1976:13) also pointed out that the superintendent of schools in the county system cannot be legally designated as a chief executive officer. He stated:

> Clearly, under this Act [the County Act of 1970] it is impossible for the superintendent of schools to be the chief executive officer. For, notwithstanding the existence of a

> school committee (Sec. 19.1.a.), it is clear that the [county] council is the ultimate policy-making authority. And the Reeve, though elected, is designated as the chief executive officer of the council.

The researcher explored the position of the superintendent in the county system, in the interviews with each superintendent. All of the district and division superintendents agreed that the superintendent should be the chief executive officer. The county superintendents stated that the superintendent must be the chief executive officer if the educational system is to function properly, and they recommended that the present legal structure for education in the county system be changed to accommodate this. The comments of Superintendent H, a county superintendent, presents the essence of the argument put forward by county superintendents. He stated:

> It is primarily a problem of the legislation under which we operate. This legislation [The County Act] relegates the school trustees to a secondary position in the county system. That is the crux of the matter. Even though the school committee can, and often does, designate the superintendent as chief executive officer of the Board of Education, the fact of the matter is that the Board of Education are a second-class elected group. Therefore, even if the superintendent is designated as chief executive officer of the Board of Education he is still a second class official . . . . The [legal] structure is impossible and the only way it will work is if people insist that it works.

Superintendent G was the only county superintendent who was satisfied that he was able to perform his job without restriction in the county system, but he made it quite clear that his success was due to the good personal relationships he was able to maintain with county officials.

Does the county system, with its restrictions on the superintendent's position, affect the nature of the superintendent's work? Does the county superintendent perform the same kinds of tasks and

activities as the district and division superintendents? Tables 29 through 33 provide data that help to compare the county and district/division superintendents in various aspects of their work.

A Comparative Analysis of the Seven Major Categories of Activities for the County and District/Division Superintendents

Table 29 presents comparative data on the way in which the county and the district/division superintendents spent their working time among the seven major categories of activities.

Generally, there was little difference in the percentage of total working time devoted to the seven major categories of activities by both county and district/division superintendents. The county superintendent spent 25 per cent of his total working time in unscheduled meetings, 24 per cent in scheduled meetings, 24 per cent at his desk, and 14 per cent on the telephone. Together, these four categories of activities accounted for 87 per cent of the county superintendent's total working time. The district/division superintendent spent 26 per cent of his total working time in unscheduled meetings, 19 per cent in scheduled meetings, 16 per cent at his desk, and 13 per cent on the telephone. Together, these four categories of activities accounted for 74 per cent of the district/division superintendent's total working time.

In addition, the county superintendent worked, on average, 8.3 hours per day and the district/division superintendent spent 7.9 hours at his work. Both the county and district/division superintendents averaged 38 activities each per day.

Table 29

A Comparative Analysis of How County and District/Division Superintendents Spent Their Working Time Among Seven Major Categories of Activities

Category of Activity	Per cent of Total Working Time	
	County Superintendent	District/Division Superintendent
Unscheduled Meetings	25	26
Scheduled Meetings	24	19
Desk Work	24	16
Telephone Calls	14	13
Travel Within System	6	11
Evening Meetings	3	8
Tours and Visits	4	7

The county superintendent spent 66.2 per cent of his total working time on verbal contact with others. The district/division superintendent spent 70.6 per cent of his working time on verbal contacts.

Table 30 presents comparative data on how the county and district/division superintendents' verbal contact time was divided among various categories of activities.

The data in Table 30 show that both county and district/division superintendents spent the largest proportion of their verbal contact time with central office staff--31 per cent and 27 per cent, respectively. Approximately one-quarter of each superintendent's verbal contact time was spent with school trustees. School-based administrators took up 13 per cent of the county superintendent's verbal contact time and 18 per cent of the district/division superintendent's contact time.

Table 30

A Comparative Analysis for County and District/Division Superintendents of the Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time Spent with Various Categories of Individuals

Category of Individuals	Per cent of Total Verbal Contact Time	
	County Superintendent	District/Division Superintendent
Teachers	11	14
School-Based Administrators	13	18
Trustees	26	23
Central Office Staff	31	27
Other	19	18

The district/division superintendent initiated considerably more of his verbal contact time than the county superintendent. Table 31 presents data that compare both superintendents in relation to the control they had over their verbal contact time.

The data in Table 31 show that the district/division superintendent initiated 54 per cent of his verbal contact time and the county superintendent initiated 38 per cent of his verbal contact time. Forty per cent of the county superintendent's verbal contact time was initiated by others and 22 per cent was taken up by regularly scheduled activities. The respective percentages for the district/division superintendent were 32 and 14.

Table 31

A Comparative Analysis for County and District/Division Superintendents of the Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time: (1) Initiated by the Superintendent; (2) Initiated by Others; and (3) Taken up by Regularly Scheduled Meetings

	Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time	
Initiator of Contact	County Superintendent	District/Division Superintendent
Self	38	54
Other	40	32
Regular	22	14

Table 32 presents data for the county and district/division superintendents that provide a comparative analysis of the percentage of total verbal contact time devoted to the categories of "purpose of contact" identified by Mintzberg (1973).

The data in Table 32 show that the county and district/division superintendents spent similar percentages of their total working time on each of the "purpose of contact" categories. The greatest percentage of working time for both county and district/division superintendents was spent in giving and receiving information, 39 per cent and 46 per cent, respectively. The next highest percentage was spent on developing strategies to handle problems--31 per cent for the county superintendent and 30 per cent for the district/division superintendent. Making and receiving requests took up 17 per cent of the county superintendent's working time and 15 per cent of the district/division superintendent's working time. Public relations activities, ceremonial activities, negotiating activities and

scheduling activities, together, accounted for, approximately, 10 per cent of both the county and district/division superintendent's working time.

Table 32

A Comparative Analysis for County and District/Division Superintendents of the Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time Devoted to the Categories of "Purpose of Contact" Identified by Mintzberg (1973:25)

Purpose of Contact	Percentage of Total Verbal Contact Time	
	County Superintendent	District/Division Superintendent
Making and Receiving Requests	17	15
Giving and Receiving Information	39	46
Developing Strategy	31	30
Public Relations	3	3
Ceremonial	4	2
Negotiating	3	1
Scheduling	3	3

The data presented in Tables 29 through 32 indicate that the county and district/division superintendents spent approximately an equal percentage of their total working time on each of the seven major categories of activities. They also spent equivalent percentages of their verbal contact time with various groups of individuals, such as teachers, school-based administrators, central office staff, and school trustees. The district/division superintendent initiated more of his verbal contact time than did the county superintendent, but

they both devoted approximately the same percentage of their verbal contact time to the various "purpose of contact" categories.

SUMMARY

The data presented in Chapter 5 provided an analysis of the verbal and mail contacts of the superintendent. The figures showed that the superintendent spent approximately 70 per cent of his working time interacting with others. The majority (90 per cent) of these contacts occurred in or near his office and over 80 per cent of his contacts involved one individual per contact. Approximately 96 per cent of his verbal contact time was taken up by a combination of scheduled and unscheduled meetings and telephone calls.

A wide variety of people participated in these verbal contacts. Just in excess of 78 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts and 84 per cent of his verbal contact time were with members of his school system. Most of his system contacts and contact time were with his central office personnel (41.4 per cent of verbal contacts and 30.7 per cent of contact time) and the smallest proportion of these contacts and time were with students (.8 per cent and .4 per cent, respectively). Trustees took up 10.5 per cent of his verbal contacts and 23.3 per cent of his verbal contact time. The superintendent initiated just over 50 per cent of these verbal contacts and 44.3 per cent of his contact time, but 45.4 per cent of his verbal contacts and 36.1 per cent of his verbal contact time were initiated by others.

The verbal contacts were initiated for a variety of purposes. Thirty-seven per cent of all these contacts were for the purpose of

making requests, primarily, for information and advice. Approximately 40 per cent of all verbal contacts and verbal contact time were initiated to give or receive information. Other contacts were made for the purpose of developing strategy to solve problems, for ceremonial and public relations reasons, or for negotiation.

The data presented in Chapter 5 also indicated that the superintendent was not required to make a decision on 52.6 per cent of all his verbal contact encounters. Of the decisions he made over 50 per cent followed existing policy and regulations, or were based on precedent. A favorite tactic of the superintendent, on those occasions when he was faced with a situation requiring a decision, was to set in motion some mechanism, such as a committee, to reach a decision (this was done on 42 per cent of the occasions requiring a decision). In addition, the superintendent often postponed making a decision indefinitely (11.1 per cent of occasions requiring a decision). Some of the decisions facing the superintendent were concerned with requests from subordinates for increased expenditures or for extra supplies and equipment. These "resource allocation" activities accounted for 7.6 per cent of his verbal contacts and 4 per cent of his verbal contact time.

The superintendent was faced with numerous problems each day. Almost 15 per cent of his verbal contacts and 12 per cent of his verbal contact time were occupied in the consideration of problems. Most of these problems and problem time (76.3 per cent and 83.8 per cent, respectively) were taken up with personnel conflicts within his system.

The superintendent spent over 72 per cent of his verbal contacts and 69 per cent of his verbal contact time involved in activities that were classified as executive in nature and approximately 25 per cent of his verbal contacts and 27 per cent of his verbal contact time working on activities that were categorized as educational.

The superintendent initiated and received a considerable quantity of mail items. He received, on average, 18 pieces of mail each day and he initiated seven per day. The mail took a variety of forms, but the largest category were letters, accounting for 30 per cent of the incoming items and 42 per cent of outgoing mail. The superintendent initiated a large number of memos (32.4 per cent of his outgoing mail) and he also received and initiated a number of forms (14.4 per cent of incoming pieces and 6.3 per cent of outgoing items).

Most of the incoming mail (23 per cent) came from members of his central office staff and this same group received approximately one-quarter of the superintendent's outgoing mail. School-based administrators originated 13.6 per cent of the superintendent's incoming mail and received 14.5 per cent of his outgoing mail. Just over 13 per cent of the incoming mail originated from the Department of Education.

An analysis of the content of mail items determined that the incoming mail had two basic purposes: (1) to make requests of the superintendent (24 per cent of incoming mail); and (2) to provide the superintendent with information (76 per cent of incoming mail). The mail initiated by the superintendent had a variety of purposes.

Just over one-quarter of this mail reported on the progress of the school system's operations and programs and 14 per cent of it was used to record the development of important events or problems. Other pieces of outgoing mail were written to give directions or instructions (11.6 per cent), to grant permission to subordinates (11.6 per cent), to provide information to employees (10.7 per cent), and to acknowledge excellence or other achievements.

A comparative analysis of selected data for county and district/division superintendents showed that the nature of the county superintendent's work is similar to that of the district/division superintendent.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: THE NATURE OF A SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE BEHAVIOR

The four sub-problems set out for the study, and stated below, are discussed in this chapter.

1. What are the distinctive administrative behaviors of the school superintendent as defined in the literature?
2. What are the actual administrative behaviors of Alberta superintendents as identified through the structured observation of eight Alberta superintendents?
3. What tentative generalizations can be stated concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior?
4. To what extent are the ten managerial roles identified by Mintzberg (1973) applicable to the actual administrative behavior of the observed superintendents?

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents a discussion of the findings related to sub-problem one. The second section compares the findings of this study with those of Mintzberg's (1968) study and presents answers to sub-problem four. The final section presents a series of propositions that provide answers to sub-problems two and three.

The Administrative Behaviors of the School Superintendent as Defined in the Literature

The findings and conclusions of literature and research studies with classical, role theory, leadership and decision-making

orientations provide a limited, but useful, view of the administrative behavior of the superintendent. The role studies identified various administrative tasks which the superintendent is typically expected to perform. A review of the selection of these studies, extending over a period of 20 years, is presented in Table 33.

An examination of Table 33 shows that the superintendent performs at least eight commonly agreed upon tasks. These are identified as: (1) public relations; (2) advising the board; (3) budget preparation; (4) instructional improvement and evaluation; (5) personnel selection, development and evaluation; (6) pupil accounting; (7) managing, or advising on, property, equipment and supplies; and (8) policy development and execution.

In order to carry out the different activities associated with the task areas listed in Table 33, the superintendent engages in certain kinds of administrative processes. A number of writers have viewed administration and administrative behavior in terms of key processes (Fayol, 1916; Gulick, 1937; Sears, 1950; Gregg, 1957; Mackenzie, 1969). The administrative processes commonly identified are presented in Table 34 (adapted from Miklos, 1968:2). The seven most frequently mentioned processes are: (1) planning; (2) organizing; (3) coordinating; (4) controlling; (5) staffing; (6) directing; and (7) evaluating.

The Ohio State and University of Michigan leader behavior studies identified two important dimensions of a leader's behavior. One dimension of leader behavior reflected the degree of consideration by the leader for the needs and aspirations of his subordinates. The

Table 33

Tasks Performed by the Superintendent as Identified by Various Writers*

Administrative Tasks	Writers												
	Priest-wood 1953	Davies CPEA 1957	Collins 1958	Hencley 1958	Wilson 1960	Finlay 1961	Fensch, Wilson 1964	Stafford 1964	Dykes 1965	AASA 1968	McCubbin 1970	Fitzgerald 1975	Downey 1976
Public Relations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Advising Board	X					X			X	X			
Budget Preparation	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Instructional Improvement & Evaluation	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Personal Selection Development and Evaluation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pupil Accounting	X		X			X	X	X			X		X
Managing or advising re: property, equipment, supplies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Policy Development and Execution			X	X			X			X			X
Office Duties, Correspondence, etc.			X	X									
Providing Auxiliary Service				X	X								
Attendance at Meetings				X	X								
Liaison to Allied Educational Institutions					X								
Planning: Administration Organization and Structure						X		X			X		
Research: Diagnosing Problems							X			X			
Setting Objectives												X	

*For details on sources see Bibliography

Table 34

Components of Administration Identified by Various Writers*
Adapted from Miklos (1968:1)

Components of Administration	Writers								
	Fayol	Gulick	Sears	Newman	Terry	AASA	Koontz O'Donnell	Gregg	Mackenzie
	1916	1937	1950	1951	1953	1955	1955	1957	1969
Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Organizing	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Coordinating	X	X	X		X	X		X	
Controlling	X		X	X	X		X		X
Commanding	X						X		X
Staffing		X					X		X
Directing		X	X	X	X				
Reporting		X							
Budgeting		X				X			
Allocating				X					
Assembling Resources						X			
Stimulating						X		X	
Evaluating								X	
Decision Making								X	
Communicating								X	
Influencing									
Leading Human Effort					X				

*For details of sources see Bibliography

other dimension of leader behavior reflected the leader's emphasis on achieving results.

Bowers and Seashore (1966) used the Ohio State and University of Michigan conclusions regarding leader behaviors to develop their Four Factor Theory of leader behavior. The Four Factor Theory described the essential elements of leader behavior in terms of such administrative processes as supporting, stimulating, facilitating, planning, scheduling, and coordinating.

A number of writers have conceptualized administrative behavior in terms of a decision-process cycle (Litchfield, 1956; Griffiths, 1959; Simon, 1961). These writers contend that decision making is central to administration and all other administrative processes can be best interpreted in terms of the decision-making process. According to the decision-school of thought, the administrator spends most of his working time developing, facilitating, and evaluating the decision-making process.

A number of writers, however, have concluded that the description of administrative behavior in terms of administrative processes is somewhat misleading (Wilson, 1960; Braybrooke, 1963; Mintzberg, 1963; March, 1974). Mintzberg presented the essence of this argument when he suggested that the administrative process categories, such as those included in Gulick's (1937) acronym, POSDCORB, are too general and too abstract to provide an accurate description of the actual administrative behavior of administrators. Mintzberg (1968) concluded from his study of five chief executives that an executive's work is best described as a complex intermingling of three groups

of roles: interpersonal roles, informational roles, and decisional roles. March (1974:25) pointed out that although Mintzberg's conclusions were based on a number of studies "that did not significantly involve educational administrators" (Mintzberg's, 1968, study of five chief executives included one superintendent of schools), ". . . attempts to make similar studies of executives in educational institutions show similar patterns."

Figure 29 presents a conceptualization of the superintendent's administrative behavior in terms of administrative roles, administrative processes, and administrative tasks. This conceptualization shows how the various literature sources used in this study relate to the administrative behavior of the superintendent.

The tasks identified in Figure 29 describe the administrative behavior at a low level of inference. Such administrative tasks as: (1) budget preparation; (2) instructional improvement and evaluation; and (3) personnel selection and evaluation are primarily a description of observable administrative behaviors. The administrative processes identified in Figure 29 are essentially the methods which the superintendent utilizes to achieve the specific tasks of administration. In addition, Figure 29 indicates that the superintendent performs three major roles--interpersonal, informational, and decisional. The superintendent utilizes a combination of these roles when engaging in the various administrative processes and performing an array of administrative tasks.

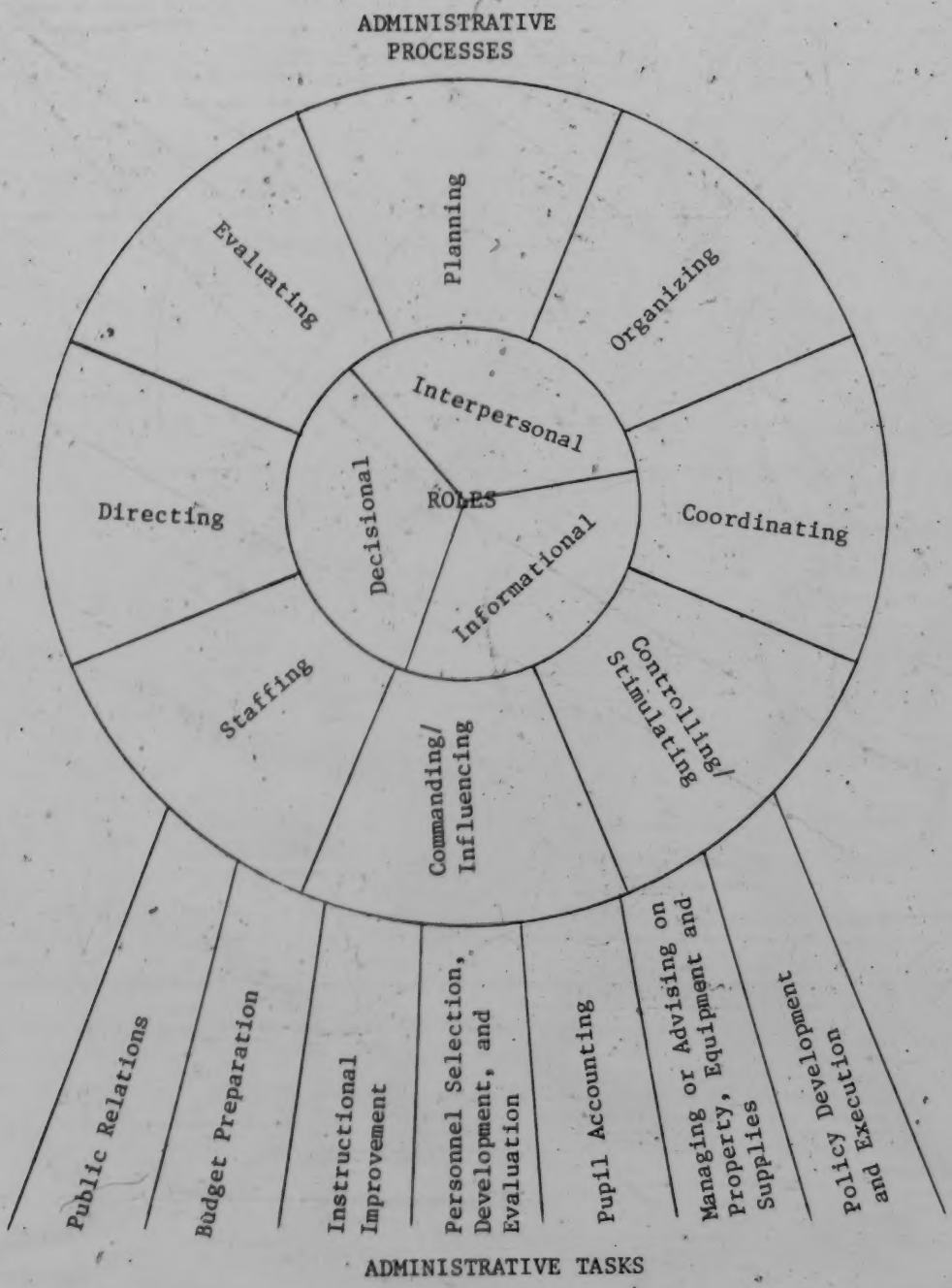

Figure 29

A Conceptualization of the Superintendent's Administrative Behavior in Terms of Administrative Roles, Administrative Processes and Administrative Tasks

What then are the administrative behaviors of the superintendent that are defined in the literature? The administrative tasks identified in Figure 29 more closely reflect the superintendent's actual administrative behavior than do the administrative processes and administrative roles. The major task areas identified in the literature imply that the superintendent spends much of his time: evaluating and improving instruction; selecting and evaluating personnel; accounting for pupils; preparing a budget; developing and executing policy; and managing and advising on issues related to property equipment, and supplies. He engages in a variety of administrative processes, such as, planning, organizing, coordinating, stimulating, allocating and evaluating, in order to perform the administrative tasks. The superintendent also interacts with a variety of people in order to acquire sufficient information to make informed decisions.

Do the Ten Managerial Roles Identified by Mintzberg (1968) Describe the Administrative Behavior of the Alberta Superintendent?

Mintzberg (1968) concluded from his study of the work of five chief executives that their jobs could be described within a framework of ten basic roles. These ten roles, Mintzberg suggested, could be best understood in terms of a combination of interpersonal, informational and decisional roles. Figure 30 (adapted from Mintzberg, 1975A:5) presents an overview of the relationships that exist among the executive's ten roles.

Figure 30 indicates that the executive's formal authority and status form the basis for his three interpersonal roles. The

executive's network of interpersonal contacts provide him with current, vital information which in turn permits him to engage in the four decisional roles.

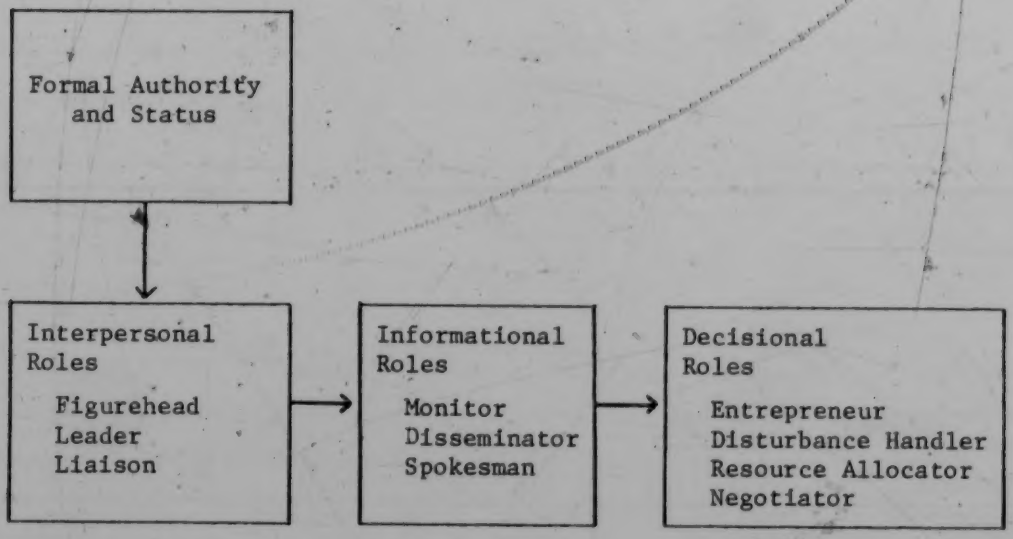

Figure 30

The Source of, and Relationships Among the Executive's Ten Roles

Tables 35 through 40 provide comparative data for the work of the chief executive and the superintendent. The data for the chief executive are taken from Mintzberg's (1968) study and the data for the superintendent are taken from this study.

Table 35 presents comparative data of a selection of work characteristics for the chief executive and the superintendent. The data in Table 35 show that the chief executive and the superintendent worked on average just over eight hours each day. The superintendent's work, however, was characterized by an involvement in a greater number of activities, 38 as opposed to 23, each lasting on average for 13

Table 35

Selected Comparisons of the Work of the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Number of Activities/Duration of Activities/Proportion of Working Time Spent on Each Catetory of Activity	Chief Executive (Mintzberg)	Superintendent
Average Hours Worked per Day	8.08	8.2
Average Number of Activities per Day	22	38
Average Length of Each Activity	22 minutes	13 minutes
DESK WORK SESSIONS		
Average Number per Day	7	10
Proportion of Working Time	22%	20%
Average Duration	15 minutes	10 minutes
TELEPHONE CALLS		
Average Number per Day	5	11
Proportion of Working Time	6%	11%
Average Duration	6 minutes	5 minutes
SCHEDULED MEETINGS[1]		
Average Number per Day	4	3
Proportion of Working Time	59%	31%
Average Duration	68 minutes	83 minutes
UNSCHEDULED MEETINGS		
Average Number per Day	4	12
Proportion of Working Time	10%	25%
Average Duration	12 minutes	10 minutes
TOURS/VISITS/TRAVEL[2]		
Average Number per Day	1	3
Proportion of Working Time	3%	13%
Average Duration	11 minutes	19 minutes

[1]These figures include evening meetings.

[2]Travel within the system is not reported by Mintzberg so this comparison may be somewhat misleading.

minutes, as opposed to 22 minutes each for the chief executive.

Both the chief executive and the superintendent spent approximately one-fifth of their working time at their desks but the superintendent's desk-sessions each lasted on average five minutes less than those of the chief executive.

The superintendent was involved in over twice as many telephone calls as the chief executive per day, 11 as opposed to five, and the superintendent spent 11 per cent of his total working time on the phone as opposed to 6 per cent for the chief executive. The superintendent's telephone calls each averaged one minute less in duration than those of the chief executive--five minutes and six minutes each, respectively.

There was a notable difference in the proportions of their total working time devoted to scheduled and unscheduled meetings by the superintendent and the chief executive. The chief executive spent 59 per cent of his total working time in scheduled meetings and 10 per cent in unscheduled meetings, while the respective figures for the superintendent were 31 per cent and 25 per cent. The superintendent was involved in three times as many unscheduled meetings as the chief executive each day, 12 as opposed to four. The chief executive's scheduled and unscheduled meetings lasted 68 minutes and 12 minutes each, respectively, and the superintendent's scheduled meetings each lasted 83 minutes and his unscheduled meetings lasted 10 minutes each.

The superintendent spent 13 per cent of his total working time either travelling within his system or visiting schools, for an average of three such activities each day. The chief executive averaged one tour each day and he spent 3 per cent of his time on such activities.

The comparative data presented in Table 35 indicate, therefore, that the superintendent and the chief executive worked just over eight hours each per day, but the superintendent was involved in a greater number of activities and these were of shorter duration than were those of the chief executive. The superintendent spent more of his total working time than the chief executive on more spontaneous activities, such as, telephone calls and unscheduled meetings and less of his working time in scheduled meetings.

Table 36 presents data on the duration of the activities engaged in by both the chief executive and the superintendent. The data indicate that the majority of the superintendent's activities, 62 per cent lasted less than nine minutes each and only 3 per cent of his activities lasted for longer than 60 minutes each. Forty-nine per cent of the chief executive's activities lasted less than nine minutes each and 10 per cent of them lasted more than 60 minutes each.

Table 36

Selected Comparisons of the Duration of Activities Engaged in by the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Duration of Activities	Chief Executive (Mintzberg)	Superintendent
Percentage of Activities Lasting Less Than 9 minutes	49	62
Percentage of Activities Lasting More Than 60 minutes	10	3

Table 37 presents comparative data on the verbal contacts of the superintendent and the chief executive.

Table 37

Selected Comparisons of the Verbal Contacts of the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Number and Duration of Verbal Contacts/ Percentage of Working Time Spent in Verbal Contacts/Contact Initiation	Chief Executive (Mintzberg)	Superintendent
Average Number of Contacts per Day	15	26
Average Duration of Each Contact	26 minutes	13 minutes
Percentage of Working Time in Verbal Contacts	78	69
Percentage of Verbal Contacts Initiated By:		
Self	32	52
Others	57	45
Percentage of Verbal Contacts Conducted on a Regular Basis	7	2

The data in Table 37 indicate that the superintendent averaged 26 verbal contacts each day while the chief executive averaged 15. The chief executive's verbal contacts lasted on average twice as long as those of the superintendent, 26 minutes as opposed to 13 minutes. Seventy-eight per cent of the chief executive's working time was spent in verbal contacts, while the respective figure for the superintendent was 69 per cent.

Table 38 presents comparative data for the chief executive and the superintendent on the purposes for which each initiated his various verbal contacts. Mintzberg (1973) derived his ten managerial roles from the categorization of the purpose of verbal and mail contacts. Mintzberg (1973:267) explained how his statement of roles was derived:

> The theory on managers' roles derives from the statements of purpose of the managers' mail and contacts . . . . For each distinct type of activity, one question was asked repeatedly--why did the manager do this? Why did he partake in ceremonial events; why did he collect and give out certain kinds of information; why did he make certain kinds of decisions? A collection and categorization of the answers--some obvious, others not--led to a statement of roles.

An examination of the data in Table 38 indicates that there were no great differences in the percentages of contacts and the percentages of contact time that the chief executive and the superintendent devoted to the various categories of "purpose of verbal contacts" developed by Minzberg (1968). The category of purpose entitled "Total Requests," which includes requests to and from others, accounted for 34 per cent of the chief executive's verbal contacts and 18 per cent of his verbal contact time; the respective figures for the superintendent were 37 per cent and 15 per cent.

The category of purpose entitled "Total Informational," which includes giving and receiving information, observation, and review, accounted for 36 per cent of the chief executive's verbal contacts and 40 per cent of his verbal contact time; the respective figures for the superintendent were 39 per cent and 40 per cent.

The category of purpose named "Total Decisional," which includes developing strategy and negotiation, accounted for considerably more of the superintendent's verbal contact time than for the chief executive, 35 per cent as opposed to 21 per cent, respectively. This difference in percentages was due primarily to the fact that the superintendent as opposed to the chief executive spent much more of his verbal contact time developing strategies to reach a decision,

30 per cent as opposed to 10 per cent, respectively.

Table 38

Selected Comparisons of the Purposes for Which Verbal Contacts Were Initiated, for the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Purpose of Contact	Chief Executive		Superintendent	
	Per cent of Total Contacts	Per cent of Contact Time	Per cent of Total Contacts	Per cent of Contact Time
Scheduling	15	3	9	3
Ceremony	6	12	2	5
Public Relations	2	5	3	3
Requests from Others	22	13	19	7
Requests to Others	12	5	18	8
Receiving Information	14	16	11	6
Giving Information	10	8	9	6
Observation	2	1	3	6
Review	10	16	16	22
Developing Strategy	6	13	10	30
Negotiation	1	8	1	5
Total Requests	34	18	37	15
Total Informational	36	40	39	40
Total Decisional[1]	7	21	11	35
Total Secondary[2]	23	20	14	11

[1]This is Mintzberg's (1973) classification which includes developing strategy and negotiation.

[2]This is Mintzberg's (1973) classification which includes scheduling, ceremony and public relations.

The category of purpose named "Total Secondary," which includes scheduling, ceremony, and public relations, accounted for 23 per cent of the chief executive's verbal contacts and 20 per cent of his verbal contact time; the respective figures for the superintendent were 14 per cent and 11 per cent. The difference in percentages

was primarily due to the fact that the chief executive spent a greater proportion of his verbal contacts and verbal contact time involved in activities of a ceremonial nature than did the superintendent.

Table 39 presents comparative data on the nature of the chief executive's and the superintendent's incoming and outgoing mail. The data in Table 39 indicate that the chief executive received 27 items of mail and initiated nine items each day, while the superintendent received 18 items and initiated seven items. The chief executive received 39 per cent of his mail from subordinates and he directed 55 per cent of his outgoing mail to this same group. The superintendent received 46 per cent of his mail from his subordinates and he directed 51 per cent of his mail to this same group.

Table 39

Selected Comparisons of Incoming and Outgoing Mail Items for the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Mail Characteristics	Chief Executive	Superintendent
INCOMING		
Average Number Processed per Day	27	18
Percentage from Subordinates	39	46
Percentage from Directors/Trustees	1	1
Percentage from Peers	16	2
Percentage from Outside System	44	51
OUTGOING		
Average Number Processed per Day	9	7
Percentage to Subordinates	55	51
Percentage to Directors/Trustees	2	5
Percentage to Peers	17	0
Percentage to Outside System	27	44

Table 40 presents comparative data for the chief executive and the superintendent on the purpose for which incoming mail items were initiated. The data in Table 40 indicate that the incoming mail items could be classified as either making requests or giving information. Seventy-four per cent of the incoming mail provided the chief executive and the superintendent with various items of general and specific information. Twenty-one per cent of the chief executive's incoming mail and 26 per cent of the superintendent's incoming mail made a variety of requests such as: requests for information; requests for permission to initiate programs or attend conferences; and requests for them to speak at functions or attend social gatherings.

Table 40

Selected Comparisons of the Purposes for Which Incoming Mail Items Were Initiated, for the Chief Executive and the Superintendent

Purpose of the Incoming Mail	Per Cent of Incoming Mail	
	Chief Executive	Superintendent
Making Requests	21	26
Giving Information	74	74

The purposes of both the chief executive and the superintendent's outgoing mail were so diverse that no meaningful comparisons could be made.

The comparative data presented in Tables 35 through 40 indicate that the characteristics of the superintendent's administrative behavior generally parallel the characteristics of the chief executive's work

as proposed by Mintzberg (1968). There are, however, a number of differences between the superintendent's work and that of the chief executive. These major similarities and differences will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The superintendent and the chief executive each worked on average just over eight hours per day. The superintendent was involved, on average, in approximately twice as many activities as the chief executive each day, but the superintendent's activities lasted, on average, approximately half as long as those of the chief executive.

The chief executive spent three-quarters of his working time interacting with other people, while the superintendent spent just under 70 per cent of his working time in contact with others. The superintendent had, on average, approximately twice as many personal contacts each day as compared to the chief executive.

The chief executive spent approximately twice as much of his working time--59 per cent--involved in scheduled meetings as compared to the superintendent. The superintendent, however, initiated over half of his personal contacts while the chief executive initiated less than one-third of his contacts.

The superintendent and the chief executive each spent, approximately, one-fifth of their total working time at their desks processing various items of mail. The chief executive, however, processed, on average, 36 items of mail each day while the superintendent averaged 25 items. The superintendent received over half his mail items from outside his school system while 44 per cent of the chief executive's mail originated from outside his system. The chief

executive had much more written contact with his peers than did the superintendent. A large proportion of both incoming and outgoing mail for the chief executive and the superintendent were originated by, or sent to, subordinates.

Generally, the purposes for which mail and verbal contacts were initiated were similar for the chief executive and the superintendent. Mintzberg's (1973) description of ten managerial roles was derived, primarily, from the statements of the purpose of the chief executive's mail and verbal contacts. These ten managerial roles, therefore, help describe the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior. The superintendents' responses to the interview questions--questions based on Mintzberg's (1973) managerial roles--also provide further support for these ten roles. These interview responses, together with the findings from the observation of the superintendents, will be used to provide support for the general propositions on the nature of the superintendent's work presented in the following section.

Propositions About the Nature of the Superintendent's Administrative Behavior

A number of general propositions on the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior are presented in this section. Proposition is defined, in accordance with its meaning in the Oxford English Dictionary, as: "something proposed for discussion, or as a basis for argument." These general propositions can be restated in the form of working hypotheses for the purpose of further research. The propositions are supported by evidence derived from: (1) the observational data; (2) the interview responses of the superintendents; (3)

the data on the general schedule of activities for each superintendent for the week prior to the observation period; and (4) the general impressions of the nature of a superintendent's administrative behavior developed by the researcher through the use of theoretical notes.

Proposition One

The superintendent becomes involved each day in a large number of activities each of short duration. His work is essentially discontinuous in nature and he frequently has to deal with a variety of unrelated issues and problems which cause him to shift his attention from one activity to another as the situation demands.

The superintendent averaged 8.2 hours of working time each day, often working through lunch and coffee breaks. He averaged 38 different activities each day, of which 65 per cent lasted less than ten minutes each and 39 per cent lasted less than five minutes each.

There was a general lack of continuity in the superintendent's work. This was due, partly, to the fact that he had to deal with a great variety of issues each day many of which were given his immediate attention. Superintendent F referred to the multiple-task dimension of the job when he stated:

> One of the most difficult aspects of the job is to keep the multiple strands related to various issues separate and distinct. The superintendent has to perform a mental juggling operation in order to keep the numerous problems and issues in perspective at any one time.

In addition, the sequence of the superintendent's work behaviors related to any topic, issue, or problem often occurred over a prolonged period of time with numerous interruptions in-between. Superintendent F commented on the frustrations of dealing with such discontinuity in

his work. He stated, "I'd like to have a job where for once I could do things that have a beginning and an ending."

The superintendent was also frequently interrupted in the performance of his work by a variety of individuals who made demands on his time. Although the superintendent spent 20 per cent of his working time sitting at his desk, these desk-work sessions lasted on average just over ten minutes each. This inability to devote longer periods of his time to concentrated work sessions was due, primarily, to frequent interruptions by a variety of individuals who either called on the telephone or dropped in for a quick unscheduled meeting. The superintendent spent 25 per cent of his working time in unscheduled meetings that lasted on average ten minutes each and he spent 11 per cent of his working time on the telephone, each call lasting on average 4.8 minutes. The majority, or 54 per cent, of unscheduled meetings were initiated by other people. Approximately 44 per cent of all the superintendent's telephone calls were initiated by others.

Proposition Two

The superintendent spends a large proportion of his working time in verbal contact with other people. Most of these verbal contacts are with members of his school system, especially those system members who are involved with the administration of the system.

The superintendent averaged 26 verbal contacts each day and these contacts took up, approximately, 70 per cent of his daily working time. Approximately, 70 per cent of his verbal contacts and verbal contact time was spent with school trustees, members of his central office staff and school-based administrators. Less than 7 per cent

of his verbal contact time was spent with teachers and less than half of 1 per cent with students. The superintendent had little verbal contact with the Department of Education or other superintendents--1 per cent and 1.2 per cent, respectively, of total working time. Approximately 87 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contact time was spent with people from his own school system (including parents).

Proposition Three

The superintendent's administrative behavior is not as planned and organized as is suggested in the literature related to the processes of administration. The superintendent, generally, believes that the actual nature of his work prohibits him from planning and organizing his work behavior. There is evidence to suggest, however, that the superintendent's lack of planning and organization is due, partly, to his avoidance of such abstract work and to his commitment to an open-door policy in dealing with his subordinates.

The observational data on the eight superintendents observed tended to indicate that the superintendent's administrative behavior was not, generally, planned and organized. In addition to the fact that the superintendent was involved each day in a large number and variety of activities of short duration, many of the superintendent's verbal contacts were unscheduled. Unscheduled meetings and telephone calls accounted for 35 per cent of his working time. In addition, over 45 per cent of his verbal contacts and 72 per cent of his mail were initiated by others.

It was difficult for the superintendent to spend his working time in accordance with pre-established plans or priorities because

certain events or activities often triggered a series of reactions from the superintendent that lasted for a whole morning, a whole day, or even longer. This chain-reaction phenomenon was observed on numerous occasions by the researcher. A phone call, a letter, or a meeting often brought information to the attention of the superintendent that caused him to initiate a number of other activities. The notification of a problem generally caused the superintendent to pre-empt all other scheduled activities. The superintendent, therefore, spent much of his time reacting to situations and events.

The superintendent, generally, perceived himself to have little time available in which to meditate and reflect on problems and events. Superintendent B, commenting on the time available for contemplating, stated: "I rarely get time to think and when I do it is usually at the wrong time, when I don't need it." Superintendent E also claimed to have little time available for thinking. He reported: "I never get thinking time in the office. In summer I sometimes play a round of golf in the afternoon and this gives me a chance to clear out the cob-webs and do some thinking." Superintendent F pointed out: "I don't get a chance to sit down and concentrate on one item for a prolonged period. I have to go through things in a piecemeal fashion." Superintendent G also indicated that he didn't have much thinking time on the job. He stated: "I wake early and often lie there reflecting on problems. I don't get time to think over things at the office."

In addition, the superintendent perceived himself to have little time available to plan his daily operations. Superintendent E commented on the lack of available planning time. He stated: "I am

seldom afforded the luxury of being able to develop plans. I am usually behind the eight ball." This same sentiment was expressed by all of the superintendents.

The researcher observed that the superintendent rarely had "free" time in his office to think and plan. However, when occasions for planning and meditating presented themselves he tended to avoid such abstract work. Superintendent E was perturbed one afternoon when he discovered that he had apparently completed all the available work. He searched through his files looking for something that required some active work. Superintendent G reacted in a similar manner when he had some "free time." He questioned his secretary to see if there was "anything that needed looking after." The researcher noted similar instances for all the superintendents observed.

The inability of the superintendent to find free time was due, partly, to the fact that he had no definite time allocating procedures and he was generally committed to an open-door policy in dealing with his subordinates. The superintendent rarely adopted an economizing view of alternative time use, in terms of a return to time invested. The allocation of his time was based, generally, on his perception of the consequences of not attending to an issue. In other words, the decision on what to do next was based on his perception of the potential explosiveness of an issue.

In addition, the superintendent's practice of being readily accessible to his subordinates tended to encourage impromptu interruptions. This emphasis on accessibility, together with the fact that most subordinates did not like to be dealt with in a perfunctory

fashion placed increased pressure on the superintendent's already pre-empted time schedule. Superintendent E, commenting on the problem of time scheduling, stated:

> If I were to use my time more efficiently I would have to develop a predetermined time schedule. This schedule, however, would make me less accessible to my colleagues and employees and would affect my relationships with them. It is difficult for me to have an open-door policy and still control my time.

Superintendent C addressed this same problem when he suggested, "I'm always caught between wanting efficiency and running a humanistic organization."

Proposition Four

One of the primary pressures on the superintendent is the problem of organizing and controlling his time.

The superintendents indicated that they never had sufficient time available to do all the things that required doing, and they unanimously indicated that "the pressure of time" was the most frustrating aspect of their jobs.

Part of this frustration derived from the fact that there were generally no discernible yardsticks in the superintendent's work and there was seldom an indication that nothing more needed to be done for the moment. The superintendent was never sure that alternative uses of time would improve his job performance, but, he had a general feeling that something could be improved if only the time could be found. Superintendent C offered an explanation for this dilemma when he stated:

> The problem with the "proper" use of time is that the goals of the school organization are never sufficiently well defined to enable the superintendent to translate his job description into actual behaviors. It is extremely

> difficult for the superintendent to demonstrate, either to himself or to others, that an alternative [pattern of time use] would lead to an improved performance.

The superintendent had to deal with a great number and variety of problems and this also placed added pressure on his time schedule. Almost 15 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts were concerned with various types of problems. Personnel problems accounted for 76.3 per cent of all the verbal contacts and 83.8 per cent of the verbal contact time devoted to problems. Superintendent F commented on the time consuming nature of personnel problems. He stated: "People problems persist and they are rarely easy to resolve. The most difficult problems I have to deal with are personnel problems. These problems are time consuming and upsetting." Superintendent H also indicated that most of his working problems were "people problems." He commented: "It is usually not a case [when dealing with problems] of this is the issue, but these are the people."

In addition, the superintendent had to meet various deadlines which placed added pressures on him and, frequently, caused him to deal with issues quickly and in a superficial manner. He was constantly trying to strike a balance between pace and quality, but the existence of deadlines tended to pressure him to sacrifice quality for pace. He was often forced, because of deadlines, to condense his efforts within restricted time frames. For example, Superintendents A, C, D, E, G, and H had meetings with their school boards during the period of observation and each had to prepare a superintendent's report and complete additional tasks assigned to him at the previous meeting. Superintendents E and F each had to deal with grievances laid by an employee's

union and they each had two days in which to make a response. In addition, Superintendent F had to deal with the resignation of an assistant.

The superintendent had also to meet such deadlines as imposed by Department of Education requests, teachers' requests to attend conferences, and preparation of budget.

The superintendent, however, was not on a treadmill. He did have some control over various aspects of his work behavior. He could and did say no to a number of demands on his time, thereby avoiding an initial commitment to a series of activities. Superintendent E pointed out that if he accepted all the invitations to attend evening meetings he received, he "would never see his family," so he often declined to attend such functions. Superintendent D delegated the responsibility for attending a number of evening meetings to his subordinates. Superintendent H delegated the responsibility for solving a personnel conflict problem at the school level to his assistant.

In addition, the superintendent had some flexibility in his hours of work and in the order with which he dealt with some issues. Superintendent A emphasized that he had much flexibility with regard to his hours of work as he was not expected by the school board to "punch the clock." Superintendent B indicated that while he could not always plan for and control his daily time schedule, he could often decide "to do something different." He pointed out: "If I had gone out to a school this morning instead of coming to the office, this day would never have happened as it did."

Superintendent C, commenting on this same subject of time scheduling and control, stated:

> I have a lot of control over the control of my time. I can decide to leave the office to visit a school and avoid the office pandemonium. Also, others don't control the sequence of what I do. I often prioritize what I want to do and later I reorder them for my own convenience.

The researcher noted that the superintendents, sometimes, reordered the sequence in which they dealt with low priority issues and problems, but they tended to react immediately to situations that they perceived to be problematic.

Proposition Five

There are general daily, weekly, and seasonal patterns in the superintendent's administrative behavior.

The mornings, prior to school opening time, tended to be less hectic and Superintendent B offered an explanation for this. He stated: "Early morning is a peaceful time for routine scheduled work. However, as soon as the working day begins in the schools the telephone begins to ring." The superintendent made many contacts during school hours, but as soon as school was over for the day many school-based administrators and teachers came to his office. The superintendent, therefore, tended to be involved in a large number of impromptu or unscheduled meetings after 4:00 p.m.

In addition, the pace of work slowed down perceptibly on Fridays. On Friday afternoons the superintendent usually conducted an informal review of the week's progress with his assistants. Superintendent E offered an explanation for this slower work pace on Fridays. He suggested: "Things are slower on Friday because schools tend to hold on

to their problems until Monday and then it's pandemonium again." Monday tended to be a day, therefore, when school principals notified the superintendent of emerging problems, or when existing problems were re-examined.

All of the superintendents indicated that there tended to be seasonal patterns in their work activities. At the end of September each year a variety of forms and school reports had to be submitted to the Department of Education. Budget planning and preparation took up large amounts of the superintendent's time each October and November. In addition, they stated that the superintendent was expected to attend various social and ceremonial functions--such as staff parties and graduation and awards' nights--before Christmas and near the end of the school year. The superintendent also had to submit a number of year-end reports to the Department of Education.

Proposition Six

The superintendent gathers and disseminates large amounts of information through such verbal media as telephone calls, and scheduled and unscheduled meetings. Most of the superintendent's "useful" information is related to specific issues and problems and this information becomes obsolete as soon as the problems and issues are dealt with. The superintendent's information storage and retrieval system is cumbersome and inefficient and, therefore, issue specific information is seldom committed to the permanent files, but, is usually scribbled on the superintendent's note pads or is kept in his memory.

The superintendent tried to keep himself informed of current happenings and events throughout his system. He was adept at "reading

the signs," and at recognizing situations that gave rise to problems. A phone call made to or by the superintendent was usually used by him as a probe to gather information on a variety of topics. Every meeting held with school-based administrators and teachers was used by the superintendent as an opportunity to be apprised of their current problems and concerns. The superintendent also turned his speaking engagements at evening meetings into "fact finding missions" by meeting afterwards with a variety of people and listening to their deliberations.

Superintendent C commented on the importance of "keeping one's ear to the ground." He stated: "I can learn so much about what is happening and about who is making noise by dropping into a store and buying a bar of chocolate." Superintendent F commented that he talked regularly to "key individuals" to find out "what was happening" throughout his system. Superintendent G emphasized the "preventative role" that the superintendent must adopt. He suggested: "So long as you keep the deflectors up you can prevent the big ones [problems]. However, you cannot be prepared if you are not well informed."

The superintendent generally tapped numerous sources for information on any problem that arose. He used the telephone liberally to collect the opinions and ideas of other significant people who had a stake in any issue. He was usually the most informed person of the group when dealing with a problem. The superintendent generally used the verbal media to seek out and disseminate important information. The mail seldom brought vital information to his attention, and he rarely used the mail to disseminate information that was of a critical nature.

All of the superintendents favored the use of face-to-face contacts over telephone calls, and written communications were looked upon as the least desirable and the least effective of all the media. Superintendent C commented on the value he placed on face-to-face interactions as a means of communication. He stated: "One visit is as good as 15 phone calls if you want to make a point."

While 76 per cent of the incoming mail was classified as providing the superintendent with information, most of this information was general in nature. The mail was generally regarded by the superintendent as being too impersonal and too time-consuming to be an efficient and effective medium of communication.

The superintendents felt that the record keeping systems used in their central offices--written documents in organized files--were cumbersome and inefficient, which made it difficult to retrieve key information on short notice. Superintendent B stated that one of his greatest problems resulted from the fact that he could rarely "extract the specific information he required from the files," even if it was recorded there. In addition, Superintendent D was in the process of initiating a complete overhaul of his filing system so as to make it more efficient.

The temporal value of much of the information processed by the superintendent, and the ineffectivenss of the information storage and retrieval systems used in central offices, encouraged the superintendent to keep much current and vital information in a readily accessible place--in note pads on his desk or in his memory.

The superintendent disseminated much information to his assistants and subordinates. However, this often took place after the fact, when an issue or problem had already been dealt with and/or resolved by the superintendent. Many of the weekly staff meetings held by the superintendent were used primarily as briefing sessions, when the superintendent brought his assistants up-to-date on developments. The superintendent often started such meetings with the statement: "I think that you should know . . . ."

Proposition Seven

The superintendent rarely makes important decisions on his own. He usually consults with members of his central office staff or with school trustees before making important decisions. However, the superintendent is generally expected by school trustees to make recommendations, and provide an analysis supporting his recommendations, on a variety of issues that require some form of a decision.

Superintendent F commented on the decision making of the superintendent. He stated: "I don't think I make decisions alone. I make most decisions in concert with others, either consulting them or knowing beforehand how they feel about an issue."

The superintendent reacted in a variety of ways in verbal interactions when he was expected, or requested, to make a decision. He made decisions on approximately half those occasions requiring a decision. However, approximately 53 per cent of the "on-the-spot" decisions made by the superintendent were programmed decisions--based on established policy and/or on precedent. The superintendent established strategies for reaching a decision, or postponed indefinitely

the making of a decision, on approximately 53 per cent of those occasions when he was expected, or requested, to make a decision. The existence of school-board policy and the tendency for the superintendent to consult trustees on any decisions that required the spending of money, reduced the number of important decisions made by him.

Although the superintendent did not have to make many important decisions on his own, he was expected by school trustees to recommend courses of action for many issues and events. Superintendents A, C, D, E, G, and H attended meetings with their school boards during the period of observation. All of these superintendents were generally regarded by the school trustees as the "experts" and their advice was sought on all matters of consequence. Superintendents D, F, and H made recommendations and offered their opinions on motions that were before the meetings.

Superintendent D commented on the importance of the superintendent's recommendations. He pointed out that a superintendent "will stand or fall on the quality of his recommendations." In addition, Superintendent H stated: "Decisions can only be as good as the recommendations on which they are based and on the quality of the analyses supporting them." Superintendent F emphasized that a superintendent would not long survive in his job if he "consistently made weak or ill-informed recommendations."

Some of the superintendents interviewed felt, however, that there were occasions when they had to make important decisions. Superintendent B pointed out that "the decisions that come to the superintendent are the difficult and important ones because if they were easy someone else would have made them." Superintendent F,

commenting on the difficulty of making some decisions stated: "The superintendent has to make some decisions in isolation and then live with them. The tough ones are those your close associates don't agree with." Superintendent G, commenting on this same topic, declared: "When you have to make a decision that neither the school board nor the teachers support, then it's tough."

Proposition Eight

The superintendent occupies a unique position in his school system. He has to deal with varying, and sometimes conflicting, expectations and multiple demands of different interest groups. As a result, he is often called upon to act as a mediator and/or arbitrator in various disputes. He also has to be aware of the political forces that surround him and he has to, on occasion, become political himself in his dealings with individuals and groups.

Superintendent H spoke about the fact that the superintendent often finds himself caught in the middle between such groups as: (1) school trustees and teachers; (2) teachers and administrators; and (3) parents and teachers. Superintendent E pointed out that the superintendent often has to defend school board policy before administrators, teachers, students, and parents, while at the same time he has to make the board aware of the wishes and demands of these same groups.

A synthesis of the feelings of the superintendents interviewed regarding the various groups demands that they deal with reads:

> Teachers demand higher salaries, better working conditions, more supplies, fewer pupils, and more help. Students demand various freedoms in school. Parents demand better programs, special treatment for their children, and better busing. School trustees demand increased efficiency, greater accountability.

The superintendent generally tried to diffuse explosive situations. He, usually, acted as a facilitator by establishing mechanisms, and setting processes in motion, to mediate conflict. Superintendent H spent almost a full morning arranging for two parents who were in conflict to meet, first with the school principal and later with his assistant. Many conflict situations were resolved by the superintendent without leaving his office; by calling various interested parties on the telephone, setting up meetings and by offering his opinions and advice.

The superintendent was usually very much aware of the necessity for recognizing the political dimensions of an issue or event. Superintendent C acknowledged this political dimension of his work when he stated:

> I play politics, but I don't play games with people's lives. I have to know the right people. My biggest failures were due to the fact that I failed to recognize the political component in what I was doing.

Superintendent E also indicated that he had to "play politics" at times. He suggested: "The superintendent's job is very political and it is getting more so. I constantly have to negotiate [among groups] to bring about the best solutions." Superintendent G suggested that the superintendent finds himself in a job where he must be politically astute. He stated:

> You are more a creature of the elected body [the school board] than you are a representative of the educators, consequently you have to learn to roll with the punches and that means being political. You learn very quickly not to give answers that will allow people later on to pin you to the wall. You have to develop a politician's vocabulary and leave yourself some semantic loopholes to crawl out of.

Proposition Nine

The superintendent perceives himself to be the "man-in-the middle," caught between being an administrator and representing the interests of the school board, and an educational leader and representing the interests of teachers. However, the types of activities in which the superintendent spends his time, the people with whom he spends his time, and the places where he generally spends his time indicate that he is more an executive and administrator than he is an educational leader.

Superintendent D commented on the position of the superintendent in relation to the school board and the teachers. He stated:

> Sometimes I find myself caught between what trustees want and what teachers want. I try to take a stand on issues in relation to 'what is good for the students' and if that puts me in the middle then I grin and bear it.

Superintendent F suggested that one of the most difficult things about his job was "to be your own man, not the board's man or the teachers' man." Superintendent G suggested that "If both sides [trustees and teachers] are 'squawking' once in a while you are like the umpire in baseball, close to the right track, and this may mean getting caught in the middle."

The type of activities in which the superintendent became involved indicated that he was more an executive and administrator than an educational leader. An analysis of the content of the superintendent's verbal contacts indicated that 74 per cent of his verbal contacts and 72 per cent of his verbal contact time were spent on activities that were classified as executive. Twenty-six per cent of his verbal contacts and 28 per cent of his verbal contact time was

classified as educational in nature.

In addition, 85 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts and 77 per cent of his verbal contact time was spent with members of his central office staff, school-based administrators, school trustees, and others outside his system. Just under 13 per cent of his verbal contact time was spent with teachers and less than half of 1 per cent with students.

Almost 90 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts took place in his central office building and 82.2 per cent of his verbal contact time was spent in that same location. Less than 10 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts, which accounted for just over 15 per cent of his verbal contact time, occurred in schools.

Proposition Ten

The superintendent perceives that he gains the most job satisfaction from the knowledge that he can contribute to the growth and development of his school system personnel. The superintendent feels that he occupies a unique position in education, a position that allows him to chart, somewhat, the directions for change in education and still maintain contact with students. The superintendent is generally satisfied with his job and there are few positions in education that he would regard as a promotion.

The superintendents interviewed suggested that they gained the most satisfaction in knowing that they had contributed to the growth of the school system and the clientele that it served. In addition, they indicated that they derived some satisfaction from the knowledge that they occupied status positions in their communities.

They contended, however, that the rewards of salary were not a major motivator in their decisions to stay in or leave the superintendency.

All of the superintendents regarded the position of Deputy Minister of Education as a promotion, but otherwise no one position was seen as a promotion by all. Superintendent E commented on what he could regard as a promotion. He stated: "I don't know if there is a promotion for me; certainly not in the field and still be involved with children." Superintendent H summarized the general feelings among the superintendents regarding promotion. He suggested:

> The superintendent is in a key position in society to foster the growth and development of a new generation of adults with healthy attitudes and solid values. It is a unique position and I'm in no hurry to leave it.

Chapter 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to observe, describe, and analyze the administrative behaviors of eight Alberta superintendents with a view to developing some propositions about the nature of a superintendent's work.

The Statement of the Problem

The central problem of this study was to observe and describe the actual on-the-job behavior of the superintendent of schools so as to develop a composite view of the nature of his administrative behavior.

Sub-Problems

In order to provide an answer to the major question posed in the statement of the problem the following sub-problems were stated:

1. What are the distinctive administrative behaviors of the school superintendent as defined in the literature?
2. What are the actual administrative behaviors of Alberta superintendents as identified through the structured observation of eight Alberta superintendents?
3. What tentative generalizations can be stated concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior?

4. To what extent are the ten managerial roles identified by Mintzberg applicable to the actual administrative behaviors of the superintendents observed?

The Justification for the Study

The superintendent occupies a central position in the school system. He performs a variety of tasks and functions in performing his executive responsibilities. Much of what we know about the administrative behavior of the superintendent is derived from such literature sources as: (1) literature on administration as a set of tasks and processes; (2) literature on the role of the superintendent; (3) literature on leader behavior; (4) literature on decision-making; and (5) literature on the content of managerial work.

The literature sources just mentioned present a good general description of a superintendent's administrative behavior, but, apart from some of the studies related to managerial work content, they do not provide many details on the day-to-day activities of the superintendent. The present study used participant observation as a data gathering technique to provide an indepth description and analysis of the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior. Such an indepth study helps both to present a new and different perspective on the superintendent's administrative behavior and to complement the findings of the relevant literature sources reviewed in Chapter 2. Wilson (1960), Campbell et al. (1970), Mintzberg (1973), and March (1974) have all pointed out that we must develop a greater understanding of the way in which managers and executives spend their time on the job if we are to improve both the theory and the practice of administration. This study

was designed to provide a greater understanding of the way the superintendent spends his time on the job.

The Design for the Study

A field-study approach was employed in this study to generate a description of the nature of a superintendent's administrative behavior. The processes involved in carrying out this research study constituted the design for the study. These processes were conducted in three phases. First, the researcher observed and recorded the administrative behavior of eight superintendents on the job. Second, the recorded observations were analyzed and profiles were constructed for selected aspects of the superintendent's administrative behavior. Finally, a series of propositions were generated on the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior.

Structured Observation

Structured observation was used as the primary data gathering method for this study. This method combined the inductive characteristics of observation with the structure of systematic recording. The observational approach allowed behavior to be observed as it occurred in its natural environment and it also permitted the recording of the ongoing stream of behavior so that whole events were preserved. In addition, through the observational approach the researcher was able to observe and record the everyday routine of the superintendent's job which is often omitted by such data gathering techniques as questionnaires and interviews.

One of the strengths of the observational method was that it allowed the researcher to develop his categories of behavior during his observations and after they had been completed. The researcher was, therefore, guided more in his organization of the data by the nature of unfolding events than by any categories suggested in the literature. In addition, the researcher did not have to rely on first impressions to support his developing hypotheses and propositions, but was able to put them to the test in the light of later events.

Data Collection

Structural data were collected on the pattern of each superintendent's administrative behavior throughout every minute of each day during the observation period, on all his mail and verbal contacts. A number of steps were used in recording and organizing this data. First, the details of the observed administrative behavior of each superintendent were recorded in a series of observational notes. The next step in the organization of the data was the construction of three different records from the observational notes. The chronology record described the sequence of administrative behavior in terms of the seven major categories of behavior identified by Mintzberg (1973). The contact record described the details of each contact that the superintendent made and the mail record described each piece of incoming and outgoing mail.

Data Analysis

Two types of data were recorded from the field observations. First, low inference level data were recorded in the chronology record

and in the various sections of the contact and mail records. Second, high-level inference data were generated through the use of theoretical notes and from the "categories of purpose" for which mail and verbal contacts were initiated.

Profiles were constructed for the superintendents from the low-level inference data, detailing the proportions of their working time devoted to each of the seven major categories of activities. In addition, a composite picture showing these same categories was constructed for all eight superintendents observed. Profiles on the nature of the superintendent's verbal and mail contacts were also drawn up.

Theoretical notes were developed which constituted a record of the progress of the researcher's thoughts about the meaning of the observed data. This systematic development of theoretical notes, together with the analysis of the categories of purpose in the contact and mail records, formed the bases for the generation of a series of propositions concerning the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior. Other evidence, such as the highlights of the superintendent's work week prior to the period of observation and the responses to a series of structured questions in an interview, was also used to support the propositions derived from the sources mentioned.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In general, the superintendent's administrative behavior is not as planned and organized as is suggested in the literature on the processes of administration. He cannot often control the scheduling

of his own time. He is frequently interrupted and, as a result, his work tends to be characterized by abruptness and discontinuity. He deals with a large number and variety of issues and problems each day and he rarely enjoys the luxury of being able to concentrate for long periods of time on any one task. In fact, the sequence of behaviors related to any one topic, issue, or problem is often spread out over a number of days or even weeks.

The superintendent works, on average, just over eight hours each day. He spends a large amount of his working time--approximately 70 per cent--talking to people, either in scheduled or unscheduled meetings or on the telephone. Most of these verbal interactions occur either in his own office or in other parts of the central office building. Only a small proportion of his working time is spent in schools. The superintendent interacts most frequently with school trustees, central office staff and school-based administrators. Less than one-tenth of his verbal contacts are with teachers and students. In addition, over 70 per cent of the superintendent's contacts deal with matters that can be classified as administrative in nature. The evidence from this study indicates, therefore, that in terms of (1) the people with whom the superintendent spends his time, (2) where he spends this time, and (3) the nature of the activities in which he becomes involved, he is more an administrator than he is an educational leader.

The superintendent finds it difficult to control and schedule the use of his working time. This is due, primarily, to his commitment to an open-door policy with his assistants and subordinates

which encourages frequent interruptions of his work, and to the fact that he deals with a large number of problems each day many of which require his immediate attention.

The superintendent generally does not have much free time on his hands. He spends approximately one-quarter of his time working at his desk. These desk sessions are used by the superintendent, primarily, for processing the incoming mail and initiating outgoing mail. He is frequently interrupted during these desk sessions usually by unscheduled visitors or by telephone calls. He is rarely able to devote more than ten minutes of concentrated work to any task during these sessions.

There are very few lulls in the pace of the superintendent's day, but, when on occasion he has some free time he feels that he should be busy and he searches for something he has forgotten to do. Even though the superintendent claims that he gets very little time in the office to devote to planning or to reflecting on events, he rarely takes advantage of such opportunities when they occur. However, the superintendent is generally a busy man and he performs his work at a rigorous pace.

The superintendent rarely makes an important decision without first being well informed. He uses the telephone as his primary means of collecting information on any issue or problem, but he also takes any opportunity presented to him by scheduled and unscheduled meetings to ask questions on a variety of issues. The information that is of practical use to the superintendent is usually current and issue specific. It is mostly verbal in nature--it is rarely committed to

the permanent files--and it is usually obsolete as soon as the issue has been dealt with.

The superintendent rarely makes major decisions without first consulting someone for advice. He often consults school trustees on important issues. However, he does have to make recommendations, and provide an analysis to back up such recommendations, to the school board on most important decisions. The superintendent, therefore, cannot afford to consistently make the "wrong" recommendations if he wishes to continue in his job.

The superintendent occupies a central position in the school system. He has to deal with the varying expectations and demands of a number of individuals and groups both inside and outside the school system. He has to defend school board policy to administrators, teachers, students, and parents, while at the same time making the board aware of the expectations and needs of these same groups.

Because of his central position in the school system, the superintendent often has to act as mediator and/or arbitrator in various disputes. He has to also be aware of the political forces that surround him and he sometimes has to negotiate compromise solutions among various groups. His status, derived from his job as superintendent, frequently places him in the position of spokesman for his school system. He performs important ceremonial and public relations functions for his school board.

The superintendent is faced with a number of dilemmas in carrying out his executive responsibilities. The major dilemmas identified in this study were:

1. how to balance pace and quality in relation to his work behavior;

2. how to deal with current and emergent issues while still endeavoring to plan for long-range issues;
3. how to make efficient use of his time while at the same time endeavoring to run a humanistic organization; and
4. how to portion his time between activities that are managerial in nature and those that are educational.

IMPLICATIONS

The findings, conclusions, and the propositions derived from them for this study, have a number of implications for the practice of educational administration. They also indicate a need for further research.

Implications for the Practice of Educational Administration

The small sample size cautions against making generalizations from the study to the whole population of Alberta superintendents. However, the indepth nature of the data and the use of composite scores and profiles as explained in Chapter 3, permits a degree of confidence in discussing what the nature of the typical Alberta superintendent's administrative behavior might be.

Perhaps the most obvious implication might be for practicing superintendents themselves. Many of the superintendents interviewed complained that they were usually so busy that they rarely had time to sit back and have "an objective look" at what they were doing and how they were spending their time. In addition, they indicated that even if they undertook such a task they had no yardstick against which to judge their own performance. Superintendent F suggested that a return to the practice of intervisitations among superintendents would help

them put their own work in perspective.

The description of the superintendent's administrative behavior presented in this study should provide practicing superintendents with an objective yardstick against which to judge their own practices and performances. The profiles of the superintendent's work presented in this study should help to provide superintendents with fresh insights into the way "the typical superintendent" spends his time. Many superintendents who feel that they are guilty of misallocation of time and effort may gain some satisfaction in knowing that many of their colleagues have similar misgivings. In fact, the findings and conclusions of this study indicate that the superintendent's work is generally superficial, discontinuous and subject to frequent interruptions; it is far from being as planned and organized as is sometimes thought. The fact, therefore, that the superintendent feels that he spends most of his time reacting to situations, and "putting out fires" is more a reflection of the nature of the work than it is the nature of the individual occupying the position.

The findings and conclusions also have implications for those individuals contemplating the superintendency as a profession. Individuals who prefer well organized and routine type jobs might be advised to consider carefully before seeking a superintendent's position.

Finally, the findings and conclusions would seem to have implications for the training of superintendents. The superintendent generally operates in a pressure packed and dynamic environment where he is expected to perform quality work at a hectic pace. He is also faced with such additional dilemmas as:

1. how to run both an efficient as well as humanistic organization;
2. how to put forward the board's point of view on an issue and still represent the teachers' viewpoint;
3. how to be a negotiator and also carry out the public relations functions; and
4. how to be a politician without appearing to "play politics."

Perhaps training programs for superintendents should consider his unique circumstances in the educational system and include courses that would provide him with the skills necessary to meet the challenging demands of his job.

Implications for Further Research

The findings and conclusions derived from this study complement the findings and conclusions of other research related to the administrative behavior of the superintendent. The observational approach taken in this study provides another perspective into the nature of the superintendent's work.

Many of the propositions relating to the nature of the superintendent's administrative behavior proposed in this study can be regarded as a series of working hypotheses which can be used as a focus for further research.

Finally, the small sample used in this study precludes generalizing to the population of Alberta superintendents. It is suggested, therefore, that there is utility in replicating the study within other samples, or within other populations of superintendents, to determine whether the results of this study are repeated.

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APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF CODED CHRONOLOGY RECORD, VERBAL CONTACT RECORD AND MAIL RECORD FOR SUPERINTENDENT D

THE CHRONOLOGY RECORD, THE CONTACT RECORD AND THE MAIL RECORD

The entire chronology record, contact record and mail record for Superintendent D is presented in this section.

The chronology record provides a record of the sequence of activities for Superintendent D during the five days of observation. It shows the mix of the seven major activities that characterized his work and the time devoted to these activities. The chronology record is cross-referenced with the contact record and the mail record to help the reader put the activities of the three records together in their proper time sequence. The verbal contacts were identified by sequential letters and each desk work session was numbered using the mail item numbers that were processed during that session.

The contact record provides a more detailed breakdown of Superintendent D's verbal contacts. A number of dimensions, adapted from Guest (1960), Griffiths (1969), and Mintzberg (1973) were used in recording each verbal contact.

The dimensions used were: (1) the medium of communication--scheduled meeting, unscheduled meeting, telephone call, and classroom visit; (2) the decision outcome--no decision required, decision made (programmed), decision made (nonprogrammed), strategy for decision established, or decision postponed; (3) participants; (4) initiator--self (if superintendent initiated), other (if initiated by someone else), or regular (if contact occurred on a regularly scheduled basis); (5) duration; and (6) place where contact occurred.

The contact record allowed the researcher to develop a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of the superintendent's interactions and to answer the low-level inference questions of "Who does the superintendent interact with, and where? Who initiated the interaction, and how long did each interaction last?" The attributing of purpose to these interactions constituted a higher level of inference and this "purpose dimension" became an important component for the development of propositions concerning the nature of a superintendent's work. The coding and categorizing procedures used for the purpose dimensions of the verbal and mail contacts are presented in Appendix B.

The mail record provides details on a number of dimensions of the incoming and outgoing mail. Each item of mail was categorized according to its form. The main categories of form were letters, agendas, policy documents, reports, memos, forms, catalogues, newspapers, and newsletters. The sender of each mail item was also identified and recorded. A number of categories were developed to denote the purpose for which each mail item was initiated (see Appendix B). The action taken by the superintendent in relation to each item of mail was also categorized and recorded. A mail item was denoted as having been either skimmed, read or written by the superintendent. The action he then took with each mail item was categorized according to whether it was: (1) put in work file; (2) put in the board meeting file; (3) filed for future reference; (4) sent to various individuals; or (5) put in the wastebasket.

CHRONOLOGY RECORD

MONDAY — Superintendent D

Time	Medium	Reference	Duration (in mins.)
8:05	Unscheduled Meeting	A	8
8:13	Tour	B	9
8:22	Unscheduled Meeting	C	8
8:30	Scheduled Meeting	D	118
10:28	Desk Work	1-2	7
10:35	Unscheduled Meeting	E	10
10:45	Unscheduled Meeting	F	5
10:50	Unscheduled Meeting	G	5
11:00	Unscheduled Meeting	H	5
11:05	Scheduled Meeting	I	115
1:00	Unscheduled Meeting	J	5
1:05	Unscheduled Meeting	K	45
1:50	Call	L	3
1:53	Call	M	5
1:58	Desk Work	3-5	11
2:09	Call	N	26
2:35	Unscheduled Meeting	O	9
2:44	Desk Work	6-13	14
2:58	Unscheduled Meeting	P	10
3:08	Desk Work	14-20	7
3:15	Call	Q	2
3:17	Scheduled Meeting	R	20
4:37	Desk Work	21-32	18
4:55	End of Office Day		
	Total Minutes		465

TUESDAY

7:50	Tour	A	10
8:00	Unscheduled Meeting	B	5
8:05	Unscheduled Meeting	C	5
8:10	Desk Work	1-4	21
8:31	Unscheduled Meeting	D	2
8:33	Unscheduled Meeting	E	5
8:48	Unscheduled Meeting	F	3
8:51	Unscheduled Meeting	G	6
8:57	Call	H	7
9:04	Desk Work	5-6	11
9:15	Unscheduled Meeting	I	11
9:26	Desk Work	7-8	8
9:34	Scheduled Meeting	J	71
10:45	Unscheduled Meeting	K	2
10:47	Unscheduled Meeting	L	33

TUESDAY (Cont'd) Superintendent D

Time	Medium	Reference	Duration (in mins.)
11:20	Unscheduled Meeting	M	4
11:24	Unscheduled Meeting	N	13
11:37	Desk Work	9	4
11:41	Call	O	9
11:50	Unscheduled Meeting	P	4
11:54	Unscheduled Meeting	Q	8
12:00	Desk Work	10	2
12:02	Unscheduled Meeting	R	5
12:07	Unscheduled Meeting	S	8
12:15	Unscheduled Meeting	T	20
12:35	Unscheduled Meeting	U	35
1:10	Unscheduled Meeting	V	5
1:15	Unscheduled Meeting	W	9
1:24	Unscheduled Meeting	X	10
1:34	Unscheduled Meeting	Y	13
1:47	Desk Work	11-19	25
2:12	Call	Z	3
2:15	Desk Work	20-24	23
2:38	Scheduled Meeting	A1	10
2:48	Desk Work	25-26	17
3:05	Unscheduled Meeting	B1	3
3:08	Desk Work	27	16
3:24	Unscheduled Meeting	C_1	6
3:30	Desk Work	28	15
3:45	Unscheduled Meeting	D_1	10
4:10	Desk Work	29	5
4:15	End of Office Day		
7:00-7:30	Travel	E_1	30
7:30-9:30	Evening - Scheduled Meeting	F_1	120
9:30-10:00	Travel	G_1	30
	Total Minutes		662

WEDNESDAY

8:00	Unscheduled Meeting	A	33
8:33	Desk Work	1	2
8:35	Unscheduled Meeting	B	2
8:37	Call	C	3
8:40	Unscheduled Meeting	D	5
8:45	Desk Work	2-6	3
8:48	Unscheduled Meeting	E	4
8:52	Unscheduled Meeting	F	14
9:06	Unscheduled Meeting	G	2
9:08	Tour	H	2
9:10	Scheduled Meeting	I	192
12:22	Unscheduled Meeting	J	33
12:55	Unscheduled Meeting	K	5

WEDNESDAY (Cont'd) Superintendent D

Time	Medium	Reference	Duration (in mins.)
1:00	Desk Work	11-13	12
1:12	Unscheduled Meeting	L	68
2:20	Unscheduled Meeting	M	4
2:24	Unscheduled Meeting	N	2
2:26	Desk Work	14-22	18
2:44	Unscheduled Meeting	O	10
2:54	Desk Work	23	11
3:05	Call	P	2
3:07	Desk Work	23	8
3:15	Unscheduled Meeting	Q	10
3:25	Unscheduled Meeting	R	15
3:40	Desk Work	23-24	15
3:55	Unscheduled Meeting	S	3
3:58	Unscheduled Meeting	T	9
4:07	Unscheduled Meeting	U	7
4:14	Desk Work	25-26	4
4:18	Unscheduled Meeting	V	4
4:22	Desk Work	26-28	8
4:30	Unscheduled Meeting	W	14
4:44	End of Office Day		
7:15-7:45	Travel	X	30
7:45-9:30	Evening Meeting	Y	105
9:30-10:00	Travel	Z	30
	Total Minutes		689

THURSDAY

8:05	Desk Work	1-6	25
8:30	Call	A	2
8:32	Desk Work	6	3
8:35	Unscheduled Meeting	B	2
8:37	Desk Work	6,7,8	10
8:47	Unscheduled Meeting	C	7
8:54	Unscheduled Meeting	D	11
9:05	Desk Work	9-18	15
9:20	Scheduled Meeting	E	15
9:35	Unscheduled Meeting	F	5
9:40	Scheduled Meeting	G	15
9:55	Unscheduled Meeting	H	5
10:00	Scheduled Meeting	I	124
12:05	Unscheduled Meeting	J	20
12:25	Unscheduled Meeting	K	25
12:50	Unscheduled Meeting	L	4
12:54	Desk Work	19	5
12:59	Scheduled Meeting	M	175

THURSDAY (Cont'd) SUPERINTENDENT D

Time	Medium	Reference	Duration (in mins.)
3:54	Desk Work	20	2
3:56	Call	N	9
4:05	Desk Work	21	3
4:08	Unscheduled Meeting	O	7
4:15	Unscheduled Meeting	P	10
4:25	Desk Work	22-26	7
4:32	Unscheduled Meeting	Q	4
4:36	Desk Work	27-42	29
5:05	End of Office Day		
	Total Minutes		539

FRIDAY

8:05	Unscheduled Meeting	A	10
8:15	Unscheduled Meeting	B	25
8:40	Call	C	5
8:45	Desk Work	1-5	30
9:15	Tour	E	45
10:00	Tour	F	70
11:10	Unscheduled Meeting	G	5
11:15	Call	H	5
11:20	Desk Work	6-12	20
11:40	Unscheduled Meeting	I	3
11:43	Desk Work	13-15	17
12:00	Unscheduled Meeting	J	3
12:03	Unscheduled Meeting	K	6
12:09	Unscheduled Meeting	L	36
12:45	Desk Work	16-17	15
1:00	Unscheduled Meeting	M	8
1:08	Scheduled Meeting	N	148
3:36	Desk Work	10-30	5
3:55	Unscheduled Meeting	O	5
4:00	Unscheduled Meeting	P	5
4:05	Desk Work	31-32	4
4:09	Unscheduled Meeting	Q	6
4:15	End of Office Day		
7:00-7:30	Travel	R	30
7:30-9:00	Evening - Scheduled Meeting	S	120
9:00-9:30	Travel	T	30
	Total Minutes		656

CONTACT RECORD

MONDAY

SUPERINTENDENT D

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiation	Duration Minutes	Place
A	UM	Scheduling (staff meeting)	NDR	Asst. Supt.	Self	8	Office
B	Tour	Observation (information)	"	Staff	"	9	NIO
C	UM	Review (general)	"	Sec. Tr.	"	8	Office
D	SM	Strategy (program & operations plan.)	DS	5 staff	Regular	118	"
E	SM	Observation (information)	NDR	14 Counsellors	"	10	NIO
F	UM	Review (operations planning)	"	Counsellor	Other	5	"
G	UM	Request (ceremonial)		Trust	"	5	"
H	UM	Review (operations maint. proc.)	DM(p)	Counsellor	"	5	"
I	SM	Strategy (program & oper.planning)	DS	14 Trustees	Regular	115	"
J	UM	Strategy (negotiations)	"	Sec.Tr.,Chrmn.	Other	5	"
K	UM	Strategy (oper.planning proc.)	"	Chairman	Self	45	"
L	Call	Supt.Request (oper.maint.advice)	NDR	County Sec.	"	3	Office
M	Call	Informing (inservice authorization)	DM(p)	Teacher	Other	5	"
N	Call	Informing (oper.maint. proc.)	DM(p)	Parent	Self	26	"
O	UM	Supt.Request (policy interpretation)	NDR	Chairman	"	9	"
P	UM	Review (Post meeting)	"	Deputy Supt.	"	10	"
Q	Call	Informed (policy interpretation)	"	County Sec.	"	2	"
R	SM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Deputy Supt.	"	20	"

TUESDAY

B	UM	Superintendent Request (delegate task)	NDR	Sec.Tr.	Self	5	NIO
C	UM	Scheduling (day's activities)	DM(np)	Deputy Supt.	"	5	Office
D	UM	Superintendent Request (delegate task)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	"	2	NIO
E	UM	Review (general)	DS	Deputy Supt.	"	5	"

CONTACT RECORD (Continued)

TUESDAY (Continued)

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiation	Duration Minutes	Place
F	UM	Scheduling (operations planning mtg.)	DM(np)	Asst.Supt.	Self	3	NIO
G	UM	Request (operations planning advice)	NDR	Deputy Supt.	Other	6	Office
H	Call	Request (operations planning info.)	"	Trustee	"	7	"
I	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Deputy Supt.	Self	11	NIO
J	SM	Strategy (operations planning)	"	4 staff	Other	71	"
K	UM	Scheduling (program meeting)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	Self	2	"
L	UM	Strategy (to solve personnel problem)	DS	County official	"	33	"
M	UM	Informed (operations maint.problem)	NDR	Sec.Tr.	Other	4	"
N	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Asst.Supt.	Self	13	"
O	Call	Review (operations maint.problem)	"	Asst.Supt.	Other	9	Office
P	UM	Request (professional advice)	DM(np)	Asst.Supt.	"	4	"
Q	UM	Superintendent request (policy interpretation)	DM(p)	Trustee	Self	8	"
R	UM	Review (operations planning)	DS	Deputy Supt.	Other	5	"
S	UM	Review (general)	NDR	Deputy Supt.	"	5	NIO
T	UM	Review (operations maint.problem)	DS	Asst.Supt.	"	20	"
U	UM	Observation (information)	DS	Coordinator IMC	Self	35	"
V	UM	Request (operations maint.info.)	NDR	Trustee	Other	5	"
W	UM	Scheduling (operations maint.mtg.)	DM(np)	Asst.Supt.	"	9	"
X	UM	Informed (operations maint.procedure)	NDR	Sec.Tr.	"	10	"
Y	UM	Informed (operations planning advice)	DS	Asst.Supt.	"	13	"
Z	Call	Request (inservice authorization)	DM(p)	Professor	"	3	Office
A1	SM	Informing (inservice information)	DM(p)	Asst.Supt.	Self	10	NIO
B1	UM	Request (operations planning info.)	NDR	Sec.Tr.	Other	3	Office
C1	UM	Request (policy interpretation)	DM(p)	Asst.Supt.	"	6	"
D1	UM	Review (general)	DS	Asst.Supt.	"	10	NIO
F1	SM	Ceremonial (school opening)	NDR	Parents	"	120	School

CONTACT RECORD (Continued)

WEDNESDAY

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiation	Duration Minutes	Place
A	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DM(p)	Deputy & Asst.	Self	33	NIO
B	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Deputy Supt.	"	2	"
C	Call	Informed (ceremonial requirement)	NDR	Principal	Other	3	Office
D	UM	Scheduling (day's activities)	DS	Deputy Supt.	Self	5	"
E	UM	Request (operations planning info.)	"	Chairman	Other	4	"
F	UM	Request (program info.)	NDR	Trustee	"	14	NIO
G	UM	Request (inservice information)	"	Trustee	"	2	"
H	Tour	Observation (information)	"	Trustee	Self	2	"
I	SM	Strategy (program and operations plan)	DS	Staff & Trustees	Regular	192	"
J	UM	Review (teacher evaluation procedures)	DM(np)	2 directors	Other	33	"
K	UM	Request (operations planning info.)	NDR	Trustee	"	5	"
L	UM	Review (operations planning proc.)	"	Chairman	"	68	Office
M	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DM(np)	Depty.& Chrmn.	"	4	NIO
N	UM	Informed (event)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	"	2	Office
O	UM	Informed (operations planning action)	"	Asst.Supt.	"	10	"
P	Call	Request (professional info.)	DM(p)	Teacher	"	2	"
Q	UM	Request (inservice authorization)	DM(np)	Deputy Supt.	"	10	"
R	UM	Review (resource allocation)	DM(np)	Depty.& Asst.	"	15	"
S	UM	Review (resource allocation)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	Self	3	NIO
T	UM	Superintendent request (operations maint.info.)	"	County mgr.	"	9	"
U	UM	Request (operations planning)	DM(np)	Asst.Supt.	Other	7	"
V	UM	Superintendent request (operations planning advice)	NDR	Deputy Supt.	Self	4	"
W	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DP	County Offic.	Other	14	Office
Y	SM	Ceremonial (student award)	NDR	Parents	"	105	NIO

CONTACT RECORD (Continued)

THURSDAY

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiation	Duration Minutes	Place
A	Call	Request (inservice authorization)	DM(p)	Teacher	Other	2	Office
B	UM	Strategy (operations planning policy)	NDR	Deputy Supt.	"	2	"
C	UM	Request (program information)	"	Asst.Supt.	"	7	"
D	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Deputy Supt.	Self	11	"
E	SM	Negotiating (collective agreement)	"	4 ATA,Dpty. 3 trustees	"	15	NIO
F	UM	Request (inservice authorization)	DM(p)	Teacher	Other	5	"
G	SM	Negotiating (collective agreement)	DS	8 people as above	Self	15	"
H	UM	Strategy (negotiation procedure)	"	Dpty.,3 trustees	"	5	"
I	SM	Negotiating continued	"	As above	"	124	"
J	UM	Strategy (negotiation procedures)	"	Staff,3 trustees	"	20	"
K	UM	Review (negotiation procedures)	NDR	Chrm.,Sec.Tr.	Other	25	"
L	UM	Request (professional info.)	DM(np)	Asst.Supt.	"	4	"
M	SM	Negotiating (policy)	DS	Staff,2 trustees,4 ATA	Regular	175	"
N	Call	Request (operations planning info.)	NDR	Architect	Other	9	Office
O	UM	Strategy (resource allocation)	DM(np)	Dpty.& Asst.	Self	7	"
P	UM	Informed (busing meeting)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	Other	10	"
Q	UM	Review (evaluation procedures)	DP	Asst.Supt.	"	4	"

FRIDAY

A	UM	Request (professional info.)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	Other	10	NIO
B	UM	Strategy (evaluation procedures)	DS	Dpty.& Asst.	"	25	"
C	Call	Informed (busing meeting)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	"	5	Office
G	UM	Informing (resource allocation)	DM(p)	Deputy Supt.	Self	5	"
H	Call	Request (resource allocation info.)	DM(p)	Asst.Supt.	Other	5	"

CONTACT RECORD (Continued)

FRIDAY (Continued)

Reference	Medium	Purpose	Decision Outcome	Participants	Initiation	Duration Minutes	Place
I	UM	Request (resource allocation info.)	DM(p)	Sec.Tr.	Other	3	Office
J	UM	Request (operations maint. info.)	NDR	Trustee	"	3	NIO
K	UM	Strategy (resource allocation)	DS	Deputy Supt.	"	6	"
L	UM	Scheduling (budget meeting)	NDR	Asst.Supt.	"	36	"
M	UM	Review (operations maint. problem, busing)	DS	Trustee	Other	8	Office
N	SM	Review (program, evaluation procedures)	"	Principals	Regular	148	NIO
O	UM	Request (vacation authorization)	DP	Deputy Supt.	Other	5	Office
P	UM	Strategy (resource allocation proc.)	DM(p)	Deputy Supt.	Self	5	NIO
Q	UM	Strategy (operations planning)	DS	Asst.Supt.	"	6	Office
S	SM	Ceremonial (student awards)	NDR	Parents	Other	120	School

MAIL RECORD

MONDAY — SUPERINTENDENT D

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
1	Letter	Professor	Information on 'Center for Research on Teaching'	To Assistant
2	Report	Consultant	Recommendations for system development	To committee
3	Memo	Secretary	Request to call principal	Called principal
4	"	Self	Listed trustees on various committees	To principals
5	"	Secretary	Request to call parent re busing	Called parent
6	Form	Asst.Supt.	Approval of expense account	Approved
7	"	Secretary	Approval of time off	"
8	Letter	Self	Request for more information on conference	Written to Assoc.
9	Agenda	Seminar Chrmn.	Timetable for conference on management	Read/to trustees
10	Newsletter	CSSE	Educational literature	Skimmed/briefcase
11	Memo	Self	Informing principals of busing procedures	Written/to principals
12	"	Asst.Supt.	Requesting advice on caretaking problem	Read/work file
13	Letter	Dept.Forestry	Notification of availability of center for outdoor study	Noted/filed
14	"	Parent	Request to transfer student	To Deputy
15	Form	ASTA	Registration for convention	Completed
16	Newspaper	County News	County news	Briefcase
17	"	Town News	Local news	"
18	"	Financial Post	Canadian finance	"
19	Memo	Trustee	Preferences for committee membership	Read/work file
20	Newspaper	Globe & Mail	Canadian news	Briefcase
21	Letter	Director	Request to attend seminar	Approved
22	"	Self	List of teachers and pupils for Christmas seals	Written/filed
23	Form	Dept.Adv.Ed.	Request for payment	Approved/to Sec.Tr.
24	"	Director	Request for program money	Approved/to Sec.Tr.
25	"	Director	Request for payment	Approved/to Sec.Tr.
26	Letter (copy)	Dept.of Ed.	Information on program resources	To Asst. Supt.
27	Memo	Principal	Notification and correction of pupil count figures	Noted/filed
28	"	Self	Request for cash advance for conference	Written/to Sec.Tr.
29	"	"	Request secretary to prepare materials	Written/to secretary
30	Newsletter	Dept.of Ed.	Information on availability of resources	To principals
31	Report	School	Information on career occupations program	Briefcase
32	Memo	Self	Request to send material to trustees	Written/to secretary

MAIL RECORD (Continued)

TUESDAY

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
1	Newspaper	Globe & Mail	Canadian news	Skimmed/briefcase
2	Memo	Self	Listed topics to discuss with Business Adm.	Written/filed
3	Letter	Coordinator	Thanks for your application to attend conference	Board meeting file
4	Agenda	Seminar Chrmn.	Timetable of seminar on management	Filed
5	Letter	Self	Informing CASS of eligibility of Assn.for membership	Written/to CASS
6	"	"	Informing new trustees of ASTA services	Written/to trustees
7	Agenda	"	Notes made on yesterday's board agenda	Reviewed/filed
8	Memo	Purchasing Agt.	Information on the Christmas party	Filed
9	Letter	Self	Requesting principals for program information	Written/to principals
10	Form	Deputy Supt.	Request approval of expense account	Approved
11	Memo	Self	Request for information on organization of institute	To secretary
12	Agenda	Adm.Assoc.	Administrator's meeting agenda	Skimmed/work file
13	Letter	Another Supt.	Request for information on teacher	To secretary
14	"	Self	Information for new trustees re events	Written/to trustees
15	Agenda	Reg.office	Information on principal's seminars	To Deputy
16	Memo	Self	Request Asst.to write congratulations to teachers for work done	Written/to Assistant
17	Form	Director	Request for payment for program costs	Approved
18	Agenda	ASTA	Conference timetable and information	Filed
19	Letter(copy)	Another Supt.	Another system's complaint re Department procedures	Read/filed
20	Letter	Parent	Congratulating school system on excellent programs	Read/work file
21	Report	Publishing Co.	Review of developments in educational management	Skimmed/filed
22	"	"	Developments in school financing	Skimmed/filed
23	Newsletter	AASA	Information on career education programs	To assistant
24	Periodical	University	Educational research literature	Circulate to Assts.
25	Letter	Self	Acknowledging parent's congratulations re programs	Written/to parent
26	"	"	Approving University request for system cooperation	Written/to University
27	Form	"	Completed his own expense account	To Sec.Tr.
28	Contract	Teacher	Request for signature	Signed

MAIL RECORD (Continued)

WEDNESDAY

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
1	Report	Self	Recommendations for system organization	Examined/to trustees
2	Memo	"	Information on school opening	Written/to trustees
3	Form	Asst.Supt.	Request approval of expense account	Approved
4	"	Director	Request for program expenses	"
5	Letter(copy)	Sec.Tr.	List of trustees going to conference	Filed
6	Report	Sec.Tr.	Information on new equipment	Board meeting file
7	"	Teacher	Suggestions for program improvement	Read/filed
8	"	Asst.Supt.	Suggested responsibilities of pupil services dept.	Read/filed
9	"	Asst.Supt.	Recommended organization for pupil services dept.	Read/filed
10	Memo	Asst.Supt.	Request approval of new teacher evaluation proc.	Modified/to Asst.Supt.
11	Letter	Self	Acknowledging parent's compliment	Written/to parent
12	"	"	Approving teacher's attendance at workshop	Written/to teacher
13	"	Coordinator	Request for time off for teacher	Approved
14	"	Teacher	Request permission to attend workshop	Reply later
15	"	Alta.Forestry	Invitation to attend seminar	Work file
16	Newsletter	Dept.of Ed.	Report on the progress of committee's work	Circulate to staff
17	Memo	Sec.Tr.	Information on cheque processing & delivery	Filed
18	Newsletter	Nat'l Fdn.	Information on economic education programs	Skimmed/to schools
19	"	USA District	Information on system's progress	Skimmed/filed
20	Memo	Self	Request secretary for material	To secretary
21	Letter	"	Reply, approval for teacher to attend workshop	Written/to teacher
22	Periodical	Publishing Co.	General information	Skimmed/filed
23	File	Secretary	Pertinent information to take to conference	Skimmed
24	Letter	Dept.of Ed.	Request approval for principal to attend workshop	Work file
25	Memo	Asst.Supt.	Request for permission to establish policy	Read/work file
26	Letter	" "	Request permission to advertise position	Approved
27	Letter(copy)	Principal	Request permission to conduct raffle	Work file
28	Questionnaire	Uni.student	Request information on consultative services	Work file

MAIL RECORD (Continued)

THURSDAY

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
1	Report	Asst.Supt.	Information on University graduation	Read/filed
2	Agenda	Secretary	Last school board meeting	Filed
3	"	Deputy Supt.	Consultation meeting with teachers	Amended/to Deputy
4	Report	Secretary	Last county-council meeting	Read/filed
5	"	Principal	Information on school awards night	Skimmed/filed
6	Question-naire	Uni.student	Request for information on consultative services	Completed
7	File	Secretary	File on negotiations to prepare for meeting	Skimmed
8	Letter	Self	List of trustees on committees	Written/to principals
9	Periodical	University	Educational literature	Briefcase
10	Memo	Asst.Supt.	Request approval to attend conference	Approved
11	Guidebook	ASTA	Information on proposed budget format	To Bus.Adm.
12	Agenda	Director	Proposed timetable of events for teacher institute	Noted/filed
13	Guidebook	Dept.Health	Suggested guidelines for health and safety	Noted/filed
14	"	Dept.of Ed.	Information on challenge program	Skimmed/filed
15	Report	Self	Synopsis of good educational book	Circulated to staff
16	"	ASTA	Report of annual meeting	Noted/filed
17	Pamphlet	AASA	Suggestions for public relations for trustees	To Chairman
18	"	AASA	Suggestions for board chairman	To Chairman
19	Letter	Asst.Supt.	Request approval for teacher appointment	Approved
20	Form	Self	Request for travel expenses	Written/to Sec.Tr.
21	"	Teacher	Request approval for conference expenses	Approved
22	Letter	University	Invitation to staff to attend retirement ceremony	To principals
23	Memo	Self	Sent copy of speech to education committee as per request	To secretary
24	Letter	University	Request trustee to attend seminar	Work file
25	"	Principal	Request for time off	Work file
26	"	Vice-Pr.	Request for permission to enter program	Work file
27	"	Teachers	"Thank you for your support of our project"	Read/to Asst.Supt.
28	Memo	Principal	Notification of parent-teacher interviews	Noted/filed
29	Letter(copy)	Asst.Supt.	Notification to principals of safety inspection	Noted/filed
30	Report	Principal	Suggestions for policy amendment	Read/to Asst.Supt.

MAIL RECORD (Continued)

THURSDAY (Continued)

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
31	Report	Adm.Assoc.	Minutes of last meeting	Read/filed
32	Newsletter	Principal	School news	Read/filed
33	Memo	Asst.Supt.	Advertisement for position--sample	Noted/filed
34	Magazine	Publisher	General	Briefcase
35	Agenda	Self	Consultation meeting with teachers	Finalized
36	File	"	Materials on consultation meeting	Organized
37	Memo	Secretary	Reminder to purchase Christmas party tickets	Noted
38	Guidebook	Asst.Supt.	Teacher evaluation procedures	Board meeting file
39	Memo	Librarian	Notification that requested mateiral arrived	To secretary
40	Pamphlet	University	Educational research report	Read/to trustees
41	Agenda	CEA	Timetable of CEA conference	Read/to trustees
42	Memo	Self	Request secretary to search for materials	To secretary

FRIDAY

1	Letter	Self	Approved V.Pr. request to enter program	Written/to V.Pr.
2	"	"	Approved principal request for time off	Written/to principal
3	"	"	Approved teacher request to attend workshop	Written/to teacher
4	"	"	Congratulations to teacher who organized institute	Written/to teacher
5	"	"	Congratulations to principal on school opening	Written/to principal
6	Book	Librarian	Professional literature	Briefcase
7	Newspaper	Financial Post	Financial news	Briefcase
8	"	Globe & Mail	Canadian news	Briefcase
9	"	County paper	County news	Skimmed/briefcase
10	"	Town paper	Local news	Skimmed/briefcase
11	Letter	University	Notice of reception for retiring professor	To staff
12	Memo	Self	Notifying staff Deputy will be "Acting Supt." in his absence	Written/to staff

MAIL RECORD (Continued)

FRIDAY (Continued)

Reference	Form	Sender	Purpose	Action Taken
13	Letter	Parent	Complaint about inadequate school space	Deputy to phone
14	Memo	Another Supt.	Request for program materials	Asst.to reply
15	Letter	Dept.of Ed.	Confirming approval of statistics sent	Filed
16	Memo	Self	List of trustees on committees	Written to principals
17	Agenda	Adm.Assoc.	Principal's Association meeting	Read/Adm.Assoc.file
18	Letter	Self	Approval of teacher request to enter graduate program	Signed
19	Memo	"	Request to county secretary for personnel sharing	Written/to county sec.
20	Letter	"	Congratulations to teacher for institute organiz.	Signed
21	"	"	Congratulations to teacher for institute organiz.	Signed
22	"	"	Congratulations to teacher for institute organiz.	Signed
23	Form	Asst.Supt.	Request for expenses for meeting	Approved
24	"	" "	Request for expenses for meeting	Approved
25	Letter	Teacher	Thanks for permission to attend conference	Board meeting file
26	Letter(copy)	Asst.Supt.	Informing "United Way" of contribution	Filed
27	" "	Deputy Supt.	Approving parent's request for special concession	Noted/filed
28	Report	Adm.Assoc.	Minutes of meeting	Read/filed
29	Memo	Self	Approving Asst.Supt's. request to establish committee	Written/to Asst.Supt.
30	"	Secretary	Notice of arrival of equipment	Noted/filed
31	"	Self	List of trustees on committee	Board meeting file
32	Form	Asst.Supt.	Request for expenses	Approved

APPENDIX B

THE CODING CATEGORIES DEVELOPED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE VERBAL AND MAIL CONTACTS

CODING AND CATEGORIZING PROCEDURES FOR THE PURPOSES OF VERBAL AND MAIL CONTACTS

Each verbal contact of the superintendent was categorized according to a (1) primary purpose, and (2) secondary purpose. Most of the categories used for coding the primary purposes were those developed by Mintzberg (1973) in his study of five chief executives. The secondary purpose categories were developed by the researcher.

The ostensible and overt purposes of a verbal contact were used for categorizing the contact. Generally, the primary purpose for which a contact was initiated was obvious, but on those occasions when some doubt existed in the researcher's mind he consulted with the superintendent with regard to the correct interpretation. The development of some of the primary purpose categories and all of the secondary purpose categories was an iterative and developmental process. The content of each contact, and mail item, was examined carefully and the question was posed: "What aspect of the administrative task is this concerned with?" The method used to place the purposes of contacts into various categories was to allow the data to suggest a particular category and then strive for consistency through the use of what Glaser (1965) referred to as the "constant comparative method."

Glaser suggested that when coding an incident for a category the researcher should compare it with those incidents previously included in that same category. This process demanded that the researcher reread the original observational field notes on a number of occasions until he became thoroughly familiar with the content included in each category of purpose. When the purpose for an incident did not "fit" into any of the

previously developed categories a new category had to be established and appropriately named.

A description and explanation of the primary and secondary purpose categories for the superintendent's verbal contacts are presented in the following pages.

Categories for the Primary and Secondary Purposes of the Superintendent's Verbal Contacts

Twelve primary purpose categories were identified and a number of secondary purpose categories were developed for each.

1. Scheduling. The primary purpose for a number of the superintendent's verbal contacts was to schedule a variety of activities. The categories of secondary purpose developed for scheduling were: (a) scheduling his day's or week's activities; (b) scheduling events; (c) scheduling meetings; (d) scheduling visits to schools; and (e) scheduling inservice sessions for teachers.

2. Ceremonial. A number of the superintendent's verbal contacts were of a ceremonial nature. Such ceremonial activities were classified as: (a) direct, if he actually spoke to a group or attended a function, or (b) indirect, if he was involved in planning for or arranging ceremonial occasions.

3. Public relations. The superintendent was also involved both directly and indirectly in activities of a public relations nature.

4. Negotiating. The superintendent was both directly and indirectly involved in negotiations with teachers and other staff.

5. Developing strategy. Almost 30 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contact time was spent developing strategy of various forms. The categories of secondary purpose developed for this primary-purpose category were identified as strategies for: (a) program planning; (b) negotiations; (c) maintaining the system's operation; (d) planning for the system's operation; (e) resource allocation; (f) conflict resolution; (g) policy development; and (h) inservice planning for staff.

6. Requests to superintendent. Almost 20 per cent of verbal contacts were initiated for the purpose of making a request to the superintendent. The categories of secondary purpose developed for requests to the superintendent were requests for: (a) general information and advice; (b) resource allocation information and advice; (c) system's operation and planning information; (d) professional information and advice; (e) policy and procedures interpretation and information; and (f) authorization for programs and events.

7. Requests by superintendent. The superintendent initiated a number of verbal contacts, 18.5 per cent, in order to make a request. The categories of secondary purpose developed for this primary-purpose category were requests for: (a) general information and advice; (b) system's operation and planning information; (c) legal information and advice; (d) professional information; (e) program information; (f) policy interpretation; and (g) authorization for programs and events.

8. Giving information. Nine per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts were initiated for the primary purpose of passing along information to others. The categories of secondary purpose developed referred to information on: (a) teacher and teaching problems; (b) professional matters, such as the qualifications, experience and competency of teachers who had applied for positions; (c) program development and program problems; (d) student problems and progress; (e) policy and procedures; (f) meetings and events; (g) system planning and operations; (h) inservice programs; (i) conflict situations; (j) resource allocation; and (k) delegation of a task.

9. Receiving information. The superintendent received information in 11 per cent of his verbal contacts. The categories of secondary purpose developed for receiving information were the same as those for giving information.

10. Observation. The primary purpose of some of the superintendent's verbal contacts, such as those classified as visits, was observational. The secondary purpose was generally either (a) to gather general information, or (b) to evaluate a teacher's performance.

11. Review. Over 16 per cent of the superintendent's verbal contacts could be classified as review sessions. A number of secondary purpose categories were developed for the review category. There were reviews on: (a) general matters; (b) the system's operations and plans; (c) conflict situations; (d) teaching problems; (e) student problems; (f) other personnel problems; (g) evaluations of teachers and students; and (h) negotiations.

12. Instructing. On occasion, the superintendent initiated a verbal contact to give specific instructions. The secondary purpose of such contacts were identified as instructions on: (a) procedures to be followed; (b) policy interpretation; (c) regulations to be implemented.

Categories for the Primary and Secondary Purposes of the Superintendent's Mail

The incoming mail items were classified according to primary purpose as either making a request or providing information. A number of subcategories based on secondary purposes were developed for each of the primary purpose categories.

1. Requests. The requests to the superintendent contained in the mail items were categorized according to secondary purpose as: (a) status requests--these consisted primarily of invitations to speak at a function or attend a social gathering; (b) solicitations--these consisted primarily of requests from manufacturers and publishing companies to purchase services, equipment, or supplies, and requests from individuals seeking employment; (c) requests for information and/or advice; and (d) authority requests--these consisted primarily of subordinate requests to (i) attend conferences or other events; (ii) develop a new program or set of procedures; or (iii) spend money.

2. Information. Almost 74 per cent of the mail items sent to the superintendent provided him with some type of information. This information was categorized according to secondary purpose as information on: (a) general matters; (b) educational programs and activities; (c) meetings and events; (d) the system's operations; (e) problems; and (f) acknowledging a service performed--these consisted primarily of

a "thank you" for assistance or advice given, or a function attended.

The outgoing mail was initiated by the superintendent for a variety of purposes. The most common purposes were identified as: (a) making general reports on the system; (b) recording important information; (c) giving instructions and/or directions; (d) granting permission to subordinates; (e) giving information to subordinates; (f) acknowledging excellence; (g) requesting information and/or advice; (h) requesting a subordinate to undertake a task; and (j) refusing permission to a subordinate.

APPENDIX C

THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

A structured interview was conducted with each superintendent. Each interview was recorded on tape and the responses were later transcribed and organized around the interview questions. Many of the questions posed by the interviewer were developed with the intention of measuring each superintendent's perception of how closely his work behavior corresponded to the 10 managerial roles identified by Mintzberg (1973).

The Questions

1. What is your basic administrative philosophy in dealing with your system's staff?
2. Are you often required to represent your school system on ceremonial and social occasions?
3. Do various community groups make demands on your time for such things as speaking engagements, etc.?
4. Are you expected to be the public relations officer for your school system?
5. Do you try to monitor community moods, expectations, and demands? If so, how?
6. Whom do you usually call upon for information and/or advice concerning everyday problems?
7. How do you disseminate information throughout your system?
8. How well do you keep your assistants and/or subordinates briefed about important information?

9. What comment would you make concerning the controversy over the designation of the superintendent as chief executive officer of the school board?
10. It is sometimes stated that the superintendent is "the man-in-the-middle," caught between, on the one hand, the interests of the school board, and on the other hand, the interests of the teachers. How do you respond to such a statement?
11. Is the superintendent's position "lonely," in terms of his being the one who has to make many of the important decisions and take responsibility for their consequences?
12. Are you often involved in resolving conflict situations?
13. What are the main pressures of the superintendent's job?
14. Is the superintendency a political position?
15. Do you have a "game plan" for your system for the next three to five years?
16. Are you the primary change agent for your school system?
17. Do you feel that you are in control of your time?
18. Does the demands of your work interfere with the time you have available for your private life?
19. Do you get sufficient time on-the-job to think over problems and issues?
20. Many believe that the superintendent usually is very well paid. How important is salary to you?
21. What would you regard as a promotion?